

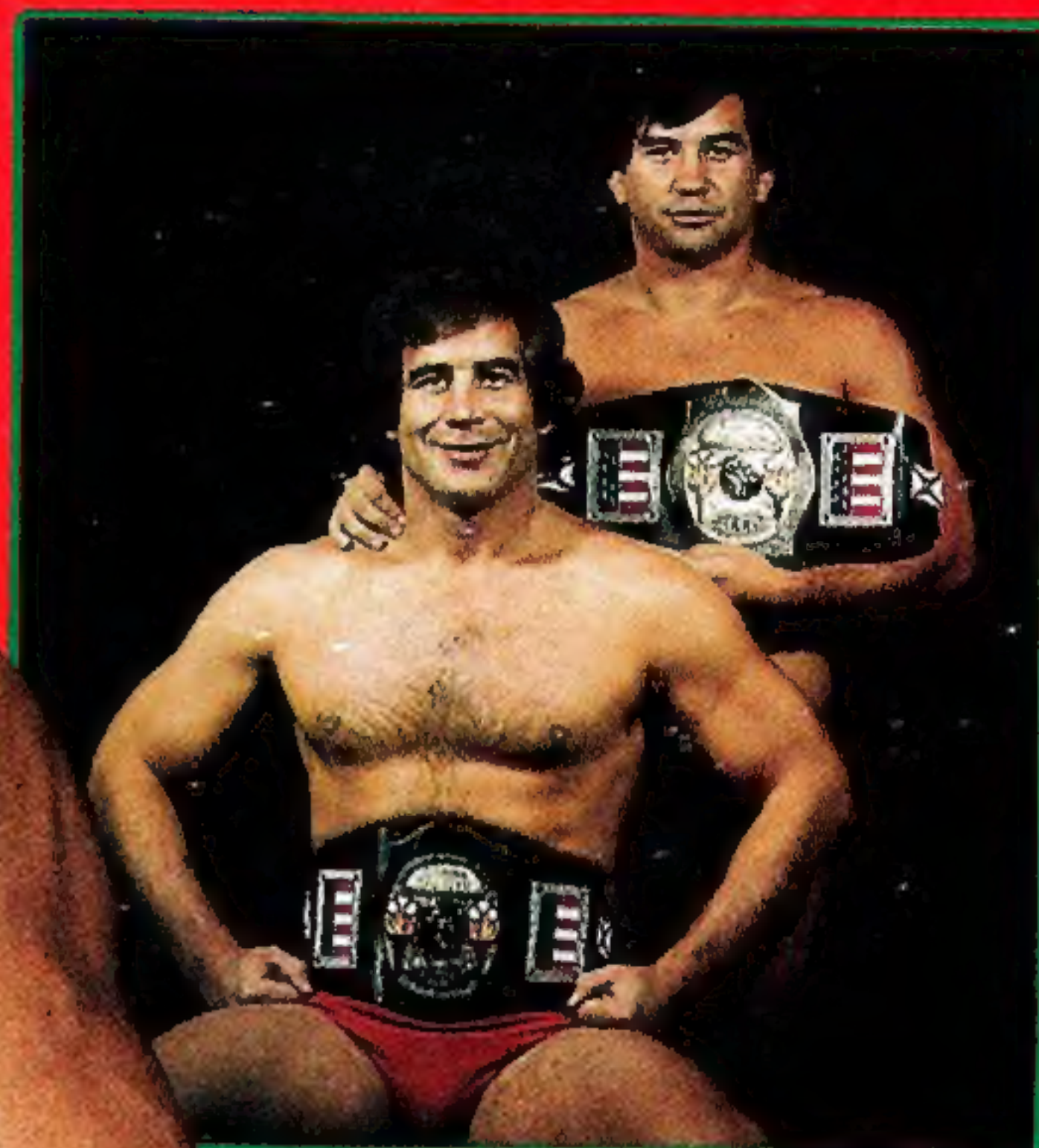
SPORTS REVIEW SERIES

October 1977
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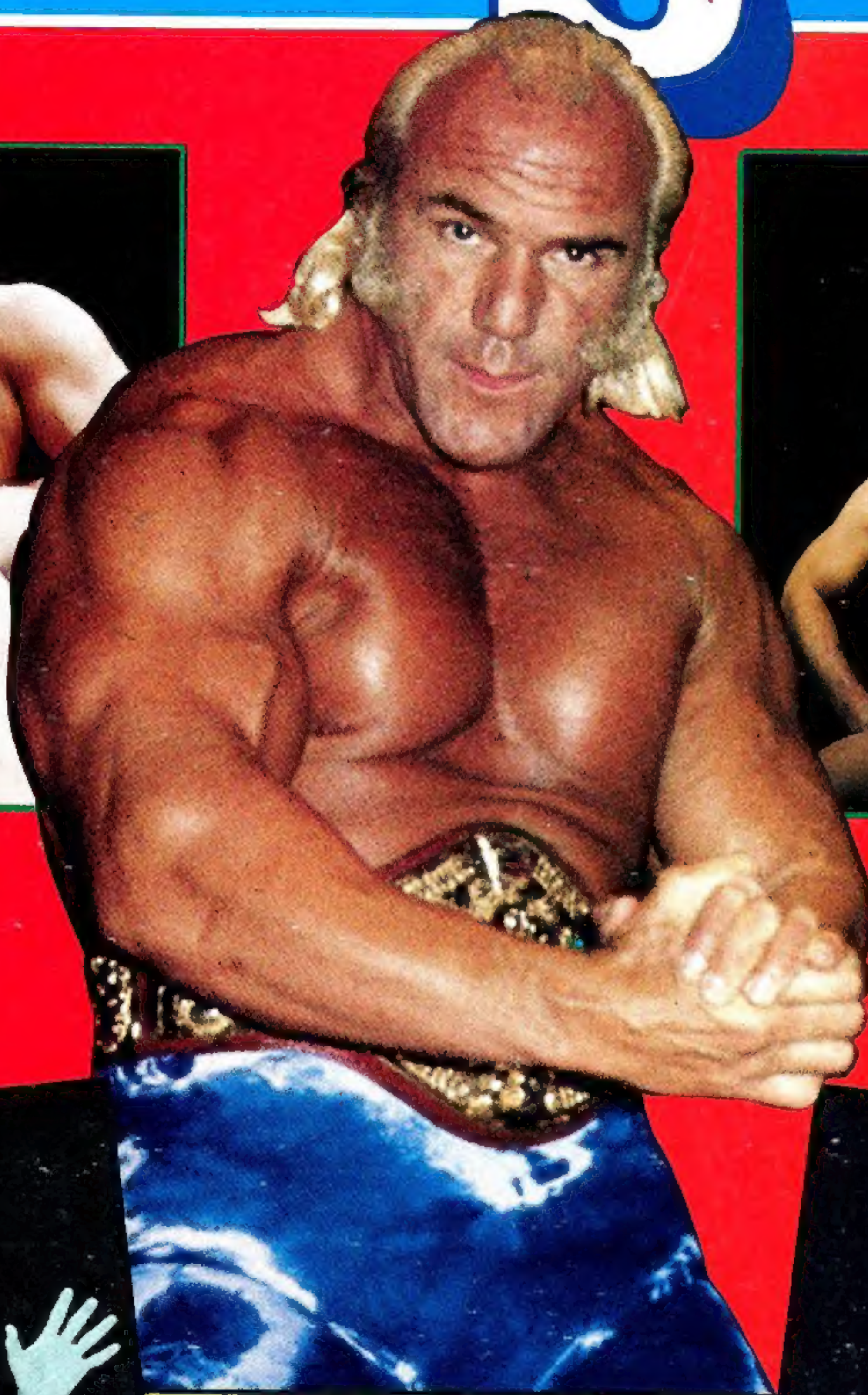
WRESTLING SUPERSTARS



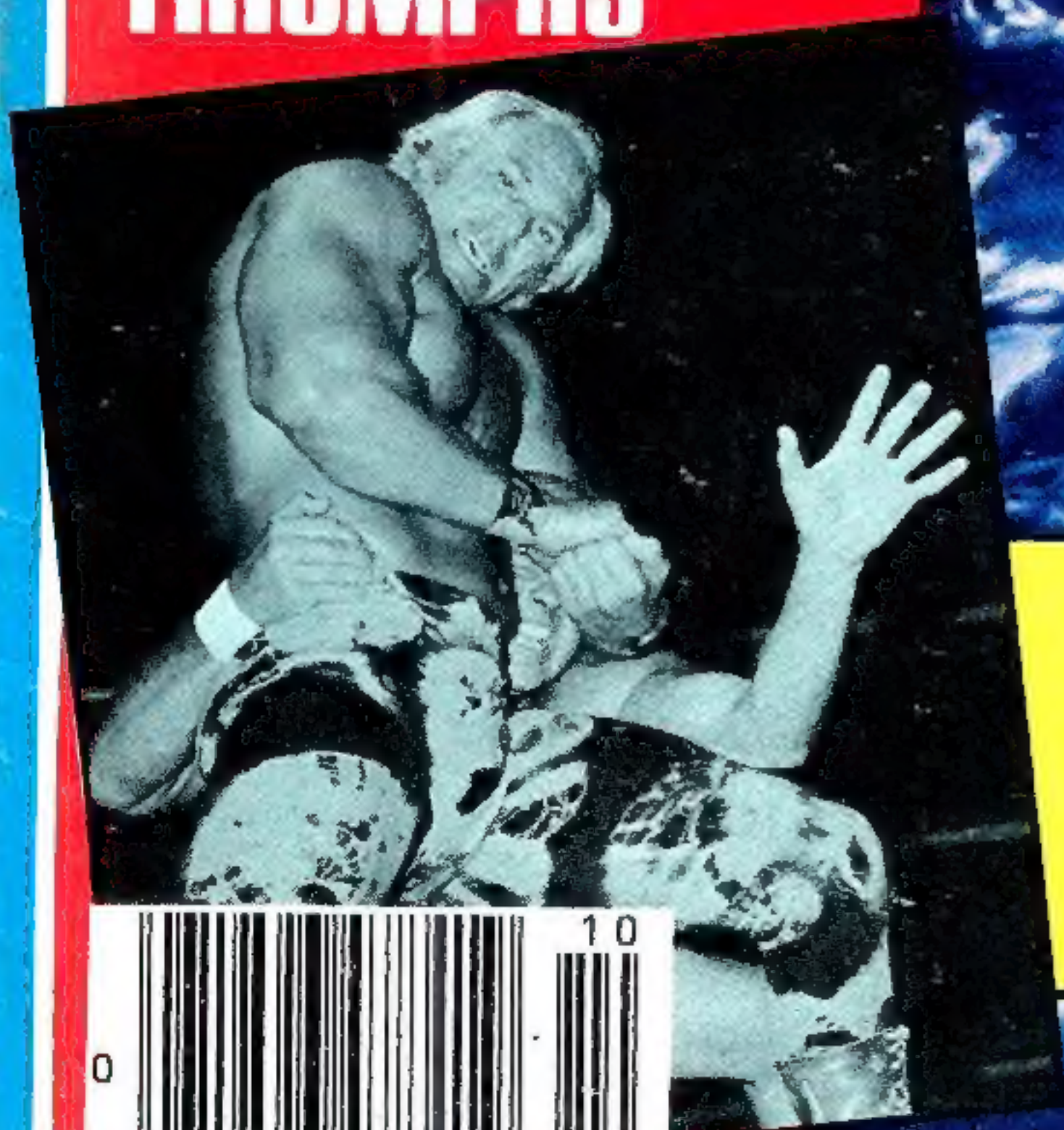
**MIL
MASCARAS'
10 GREATEST
TRIUMPHS**



**THE BRISCO
BROTHERS:
THE TAG TEAM
KILLING
WRESTLING**



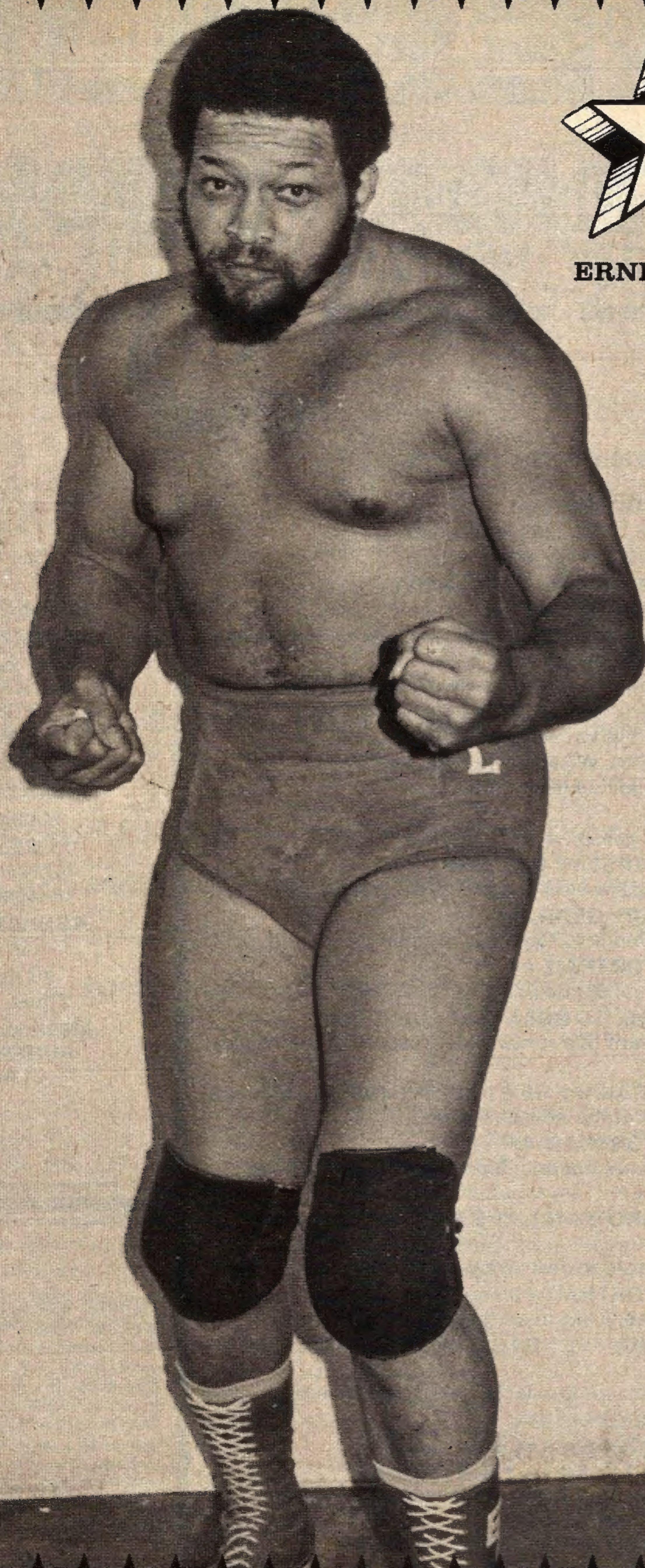
**SUPERSTAR
GRAHAM:
HE'S PROVING
HIS GREATNESS**





SUPERSTAR
PORTRAIT

ERNIE LADD



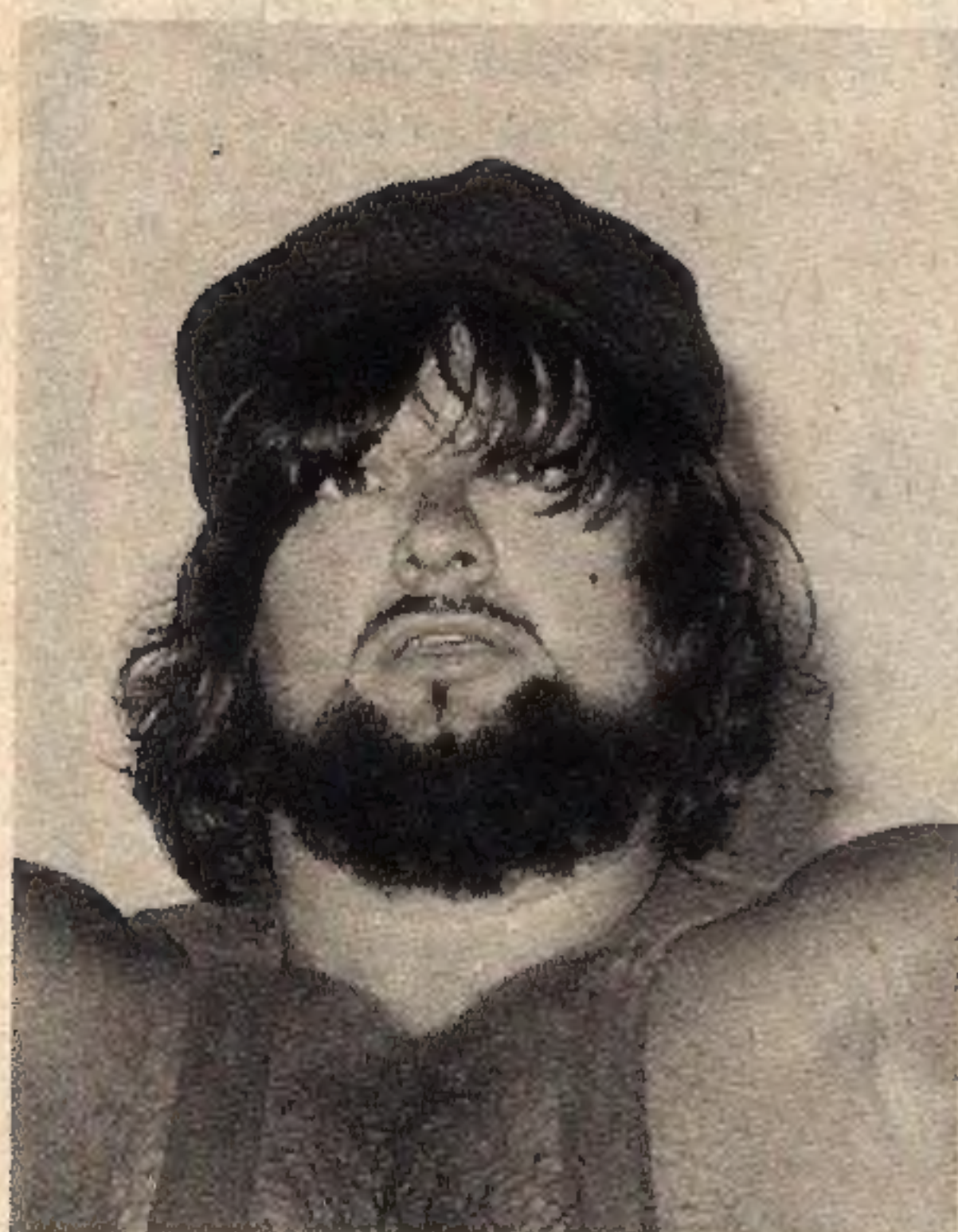


SUPERSTAR
PORTRAIT

NICK
BOCKWINKLE



SUPER STAR GRAPEVINE



MIGHTY IGOR: He has sent a personal message to Ivan Putski, requesting to meet Ivan in combat.

CURIOSITY KILLS THE CAT: We can't wait to hear that "earth shattering" announcement Peter Maivia will soon make public concerning his stay in the WWWF. Insiders say the Federation may ask Peter to pack his bags and leave the territory as soon as he makes the announcement.

* * *

Why did Terry Funk tell older brother Dory to "Bug off and run your own career—not mine!" The answer is simple. Dory insisted Terry turn down an offer to wrestle AWA champion Nick Bockwinkel—for a second time—so HE could get a shot at the champion! A split between the Funks? Maybe yes, maybe no.

WE PREDICT: Bruno Sammartino's best efforts will fail to see him regain the WWWF title from Superstar Graham.

* * *

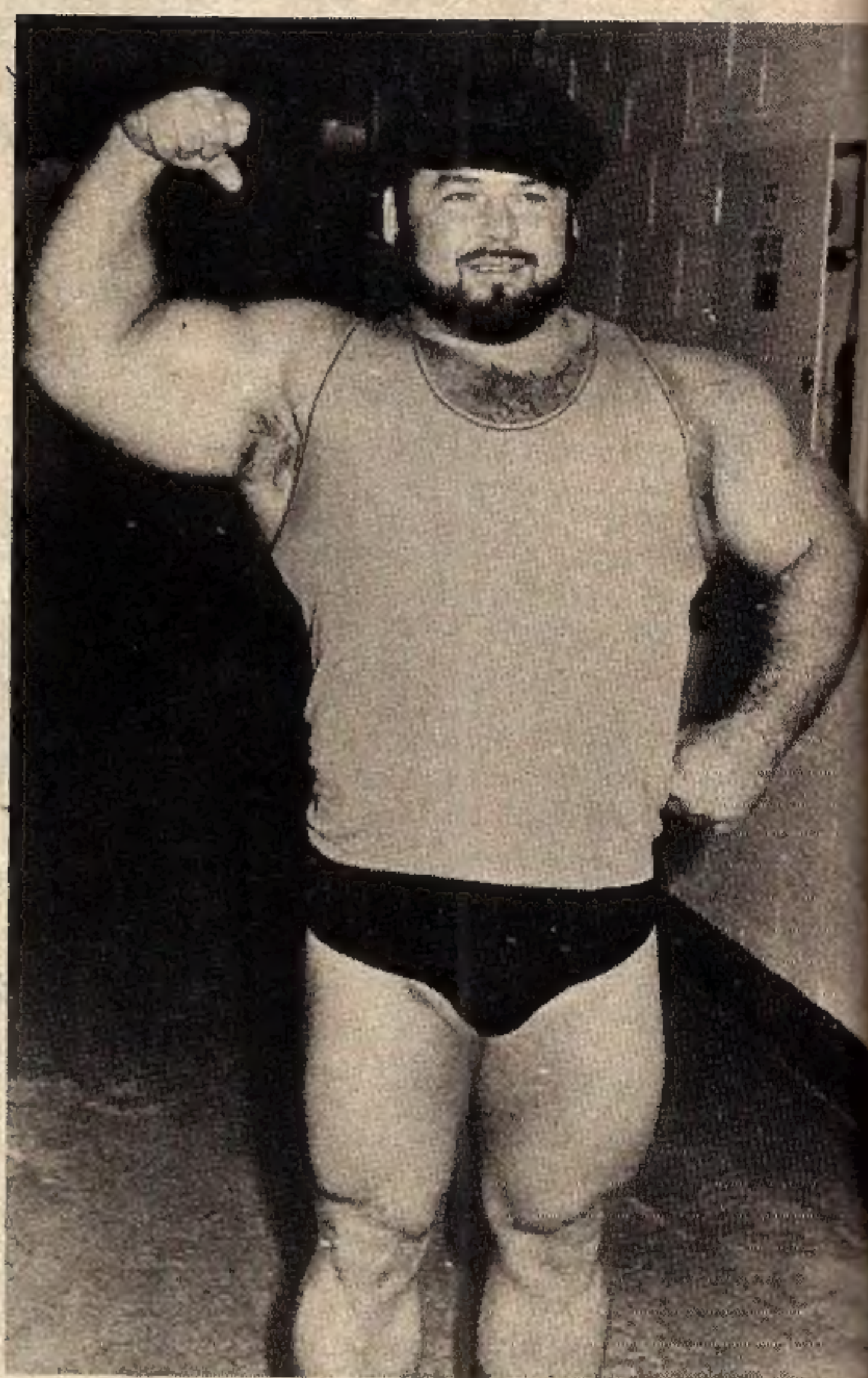
MESSAGE TO IVAN PUTSKI—FROM MIGHTY IGOR: "I am stronger than you, Ivan. We are friends but the fans must see us in combat against each other. I must prove I am the stronger. I am waiting to hear from you!"

* * *

All those fans who are worried about the rumor of Jose Lothario's muscle ailments can relax. Doctors say the grappler is just suffering from normal strain and should be back to normal in a couple of weeks. "I should have rested up when I felt the twinge in my leg last month," Jose admits. "But how many athletes do what's right for them?" Chances are Jose's foes wish the rumors were true!

* * *

Why is Don Friedman, renown wrestling betting expert, giving 8-1 odds that Harley Race will lose his title before December? Friedman, whose odds are considered law by bettors, refuses to say why the odds have gone from even money to their present state almost overnight. Race refuses to discuss the matter, although he will point out Friedman had him a 10-1 underdog the night he took the title from Terry Funk.



IVAN PUTSKI: The man who has never backed down from a challenge. Will he accept the one from Igor?

We hear Jack Brisco is trying to contact Bob Backlund in the hopes of once again being tag team partners. Everyone remembers the pair were once a brilliant combination but broke up due to internal strife. Friends have been trying for months to initiate a reconciliation, and Jack has finally consented to make the first move. For the good of wrestling, let's hope he's successful.

(Continued on page 52)



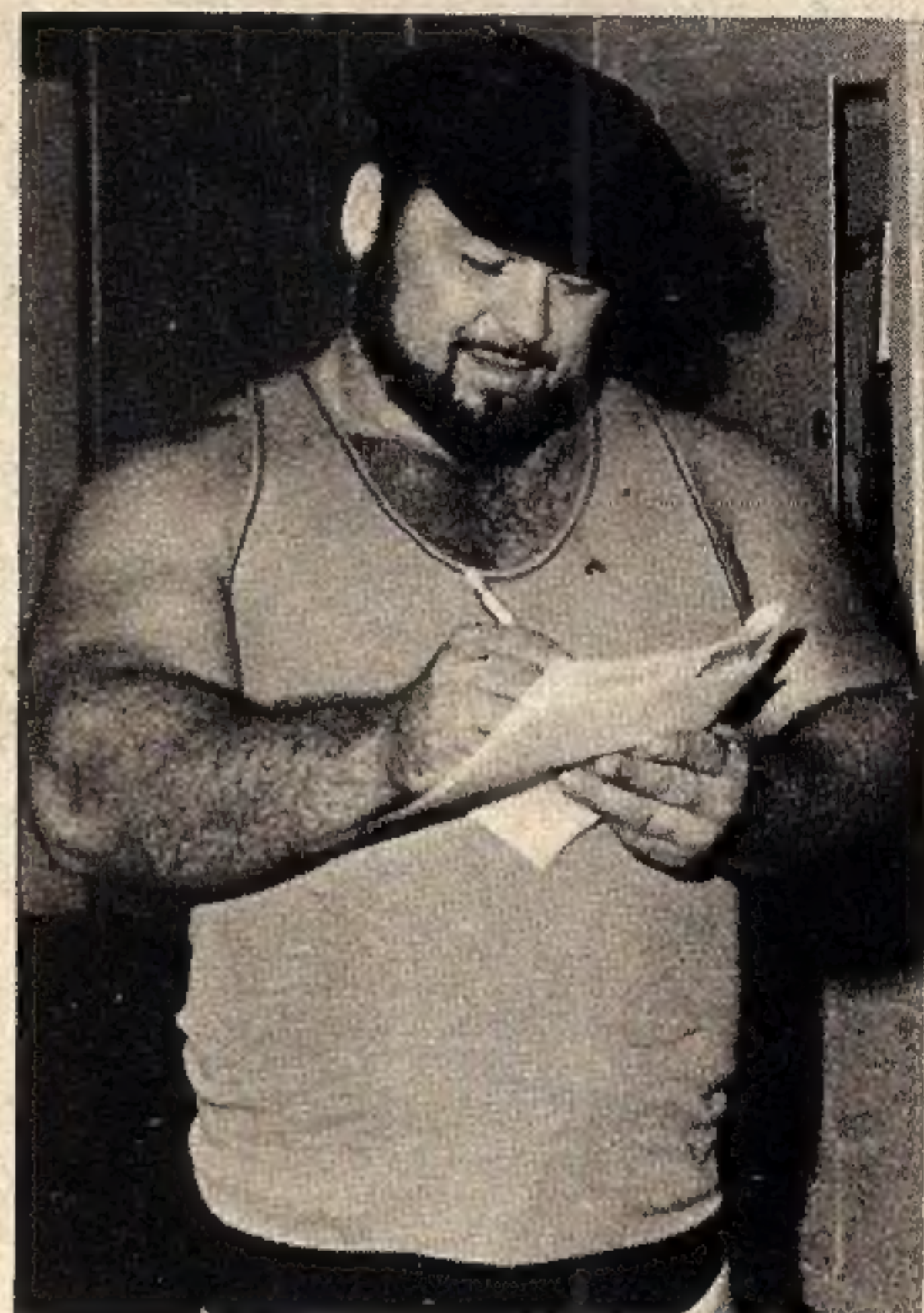
SUPERSTAR
PORTRAIT

ABDULLAH
THE BUTCHER



STAR GAZING

BY NESSIM DURRELL



Ivan Putski should be forewarned that he is in danger. He must not wrestle anyone whose moon is in Pisces.

A FEW MINUTES before dawn, when the world is blackest, a strange force led me from my bed to my desk. With no will of my own, my fingers gripped a pen and began to scribble on a piece of paper. The words written down were: "Quietly, gently, the night void encloses. Like breezes on deserts we silently glide helplessly over the dry sands beneath us, doomed to touch nothing on our warm, empty ride."

What does this mean? I asked myself. And then, with the flash of Thor's thunder, understanding came. Would that I was able to remain ignorant.

I'm afraid those of us who love wrestling are in for grave disappointment. Looking at the current domination by rulebreakers, some of us seek hope in the coming crop of new scientific wrestlers. Our prayers concerning the new grapplers' success appear to be in vain.

The cryptic message interprets as

Nick Bockwinkel (above) will be saved by his greatest sorrow. Mike Graham (below) has a promising astrological chart.

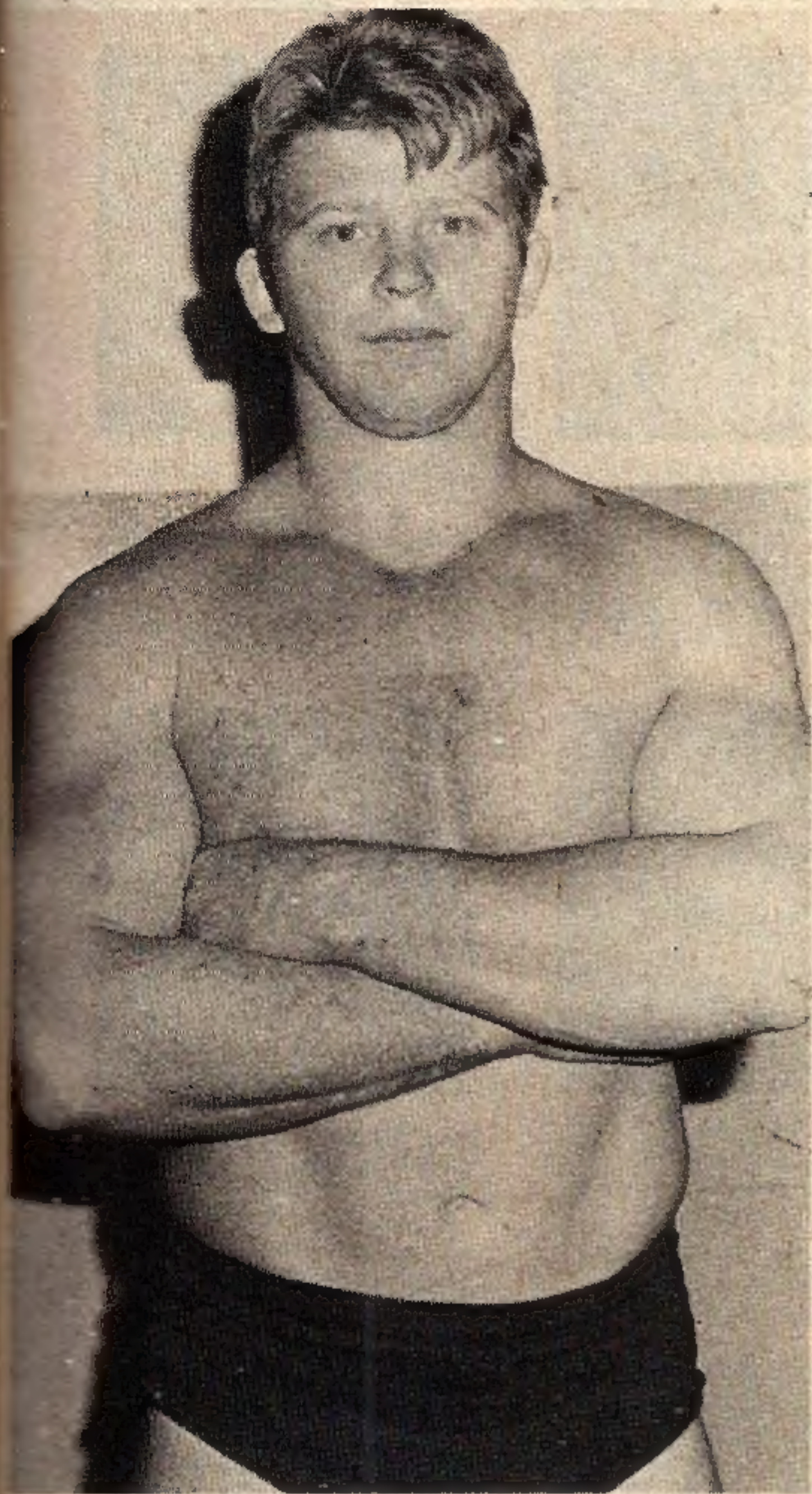


a warning against believing too strongly in the unproven mat stars' chances. While there may be some momentary ease in depending on these men, there will be no lasting comfort to be gained from these

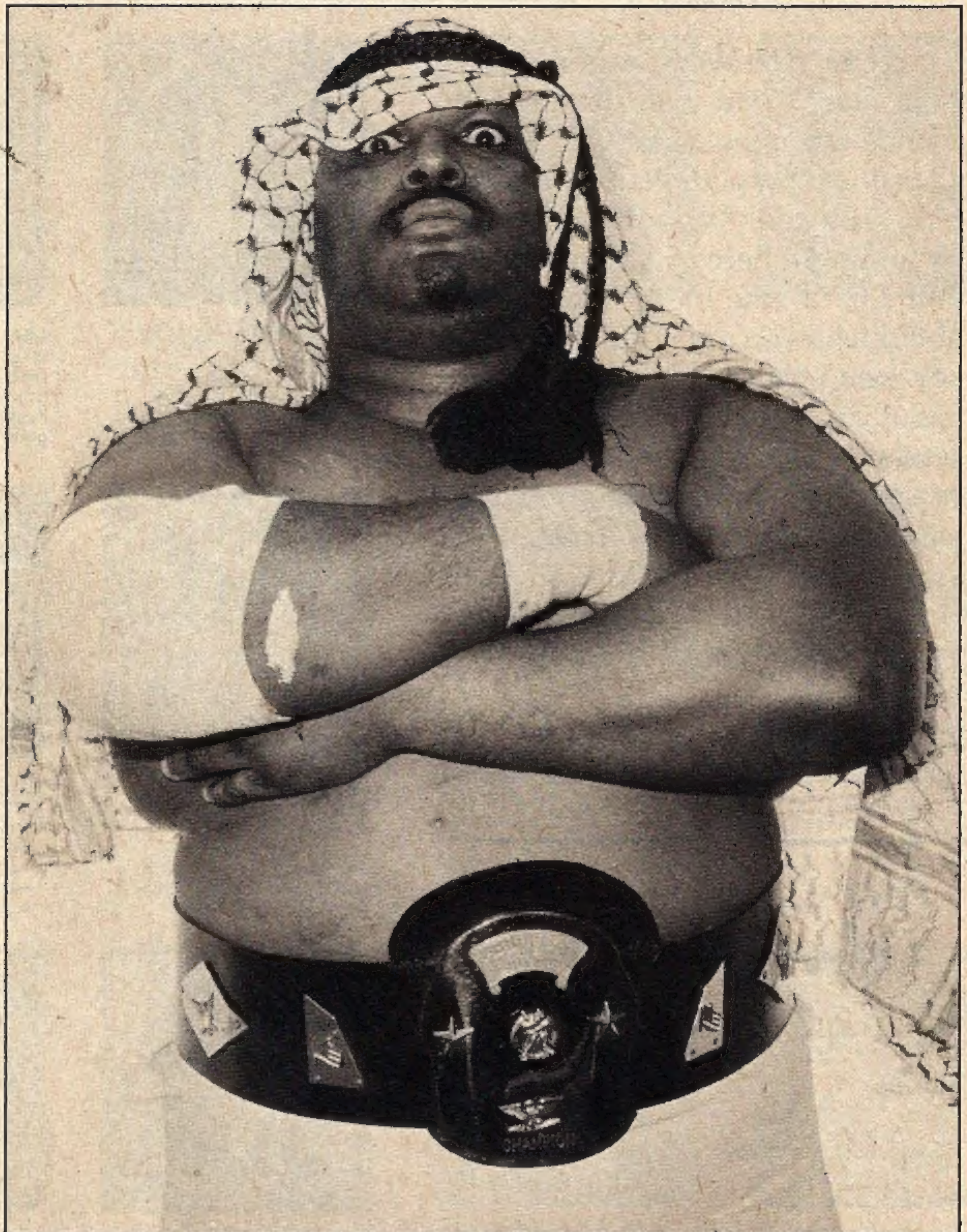
young stars. I fear the rulebreakers will continue to dominate the wrestling scene for a long time yet. Never have I wanted so much to be wrong.

Surprisingly, each of the current crop of young scientific wrestlers has a very promising astrological chart. Mike Graham, Tony Garea, Bob Backlund, Larry Zbyszko, and Steve Keirn all have promising futures. If one stands out more than the others, it is Backlund, whose Venus and Mars fall into conjunction during the fall. The stars predict this rambling man will be forced to settle down in a single area due to business reasons. This could even mean a title for the young man.

The other one of that group with a most fascinating chart is Mike Graham. There is only one reason Mike shouldn't enjoy the best year of his life—wrestlers with their sun in Taurus and their moon in Capricorn. All others should fall to this superb young athlete. The only



It appears that Bob Backlund will continue to climb to great heights. Backlund (above) has an optimistic chart. Abdullah (right) will fall to a wrestler born under a water sign.



reason Mike might lose to the aforementioned group is because his Saturn and Mercury are exerting powerful influences on the young man.

As for the veterans, the next few months should be very important for many of them. I laid over 50 photos

of different wrestlers on my table. I shut off the lights. Four of the photos started to glow. They were Ivan Putski, Abdullah the Butcher, Doug Gilbert, and Nick Bockwinkel. This sent me to the wrestlers' charts. It didn't take long to discover why the photos glowed.

First, Ivan Putski. His chart spoke of great victories but also imminent danger. He should not under any circumstances wrestle anyone whose moon is in Pisces. It will lead to certain destruction, permanent injury, and perhaps death. Also, any

(Continued on page 46)

World-renowned astrologer and psychic Nessim Durrell takes another look at wrestling, using his occult powers to predict the future. His visions may enrage, startle, and shock, but they can't be ignored!

FAN FORUM



Nessim Durrell hit the nail on the head when he predicted that Superstar Graham (above with The Grand Wizard) would win a major title. He took the belt from Bruno Sammartino (below).

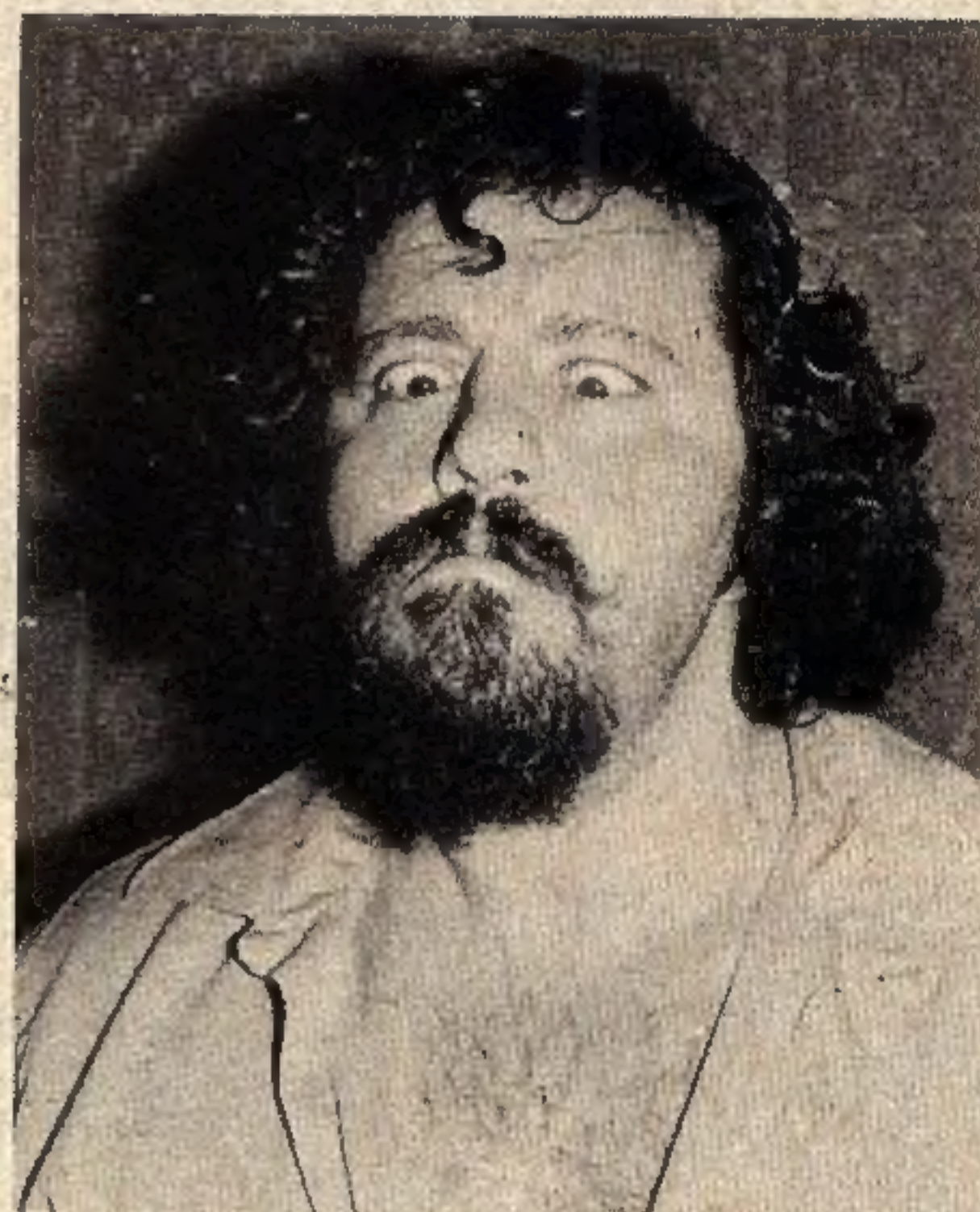


HE BELIEVES

I have to admit I was very skeptical about "Stargazing," written by Nessim Durrell. I never believed in astrology, but I decided to look into some predictions he made a while ago for the year of 1977.

I couldn't believe what I read! I started off with Bruno Sammartino and found an exact reference to his match with Superstar Graham. Nessim said Bruno should watch out for someone under the influence of Jupiter who has blonde hair over his ears. Graham fits both of these categories. It also warns Bruno not to wrestle from April to July, the period in which he lost the title. It says in Graham's

Send Letters To:
FAN FORUM
WRESTLING SUPERSTARS
BOX 38
ROCKVILLE CENTRE,
NY 11571



Although most fans enjoyed it, one fan protested about the dart board we created using Captain Lou Albano's face!

predictions for 1977 that he will do his best against a Libra. Bruno happens to be a Libra. As I continued reading, I found over 25 other predictions that have come true.

I believe in Nessim Durrell!
HOWARD MEYERSON
Brooklyn, N.Y.

IT TAKES ALL KINDS

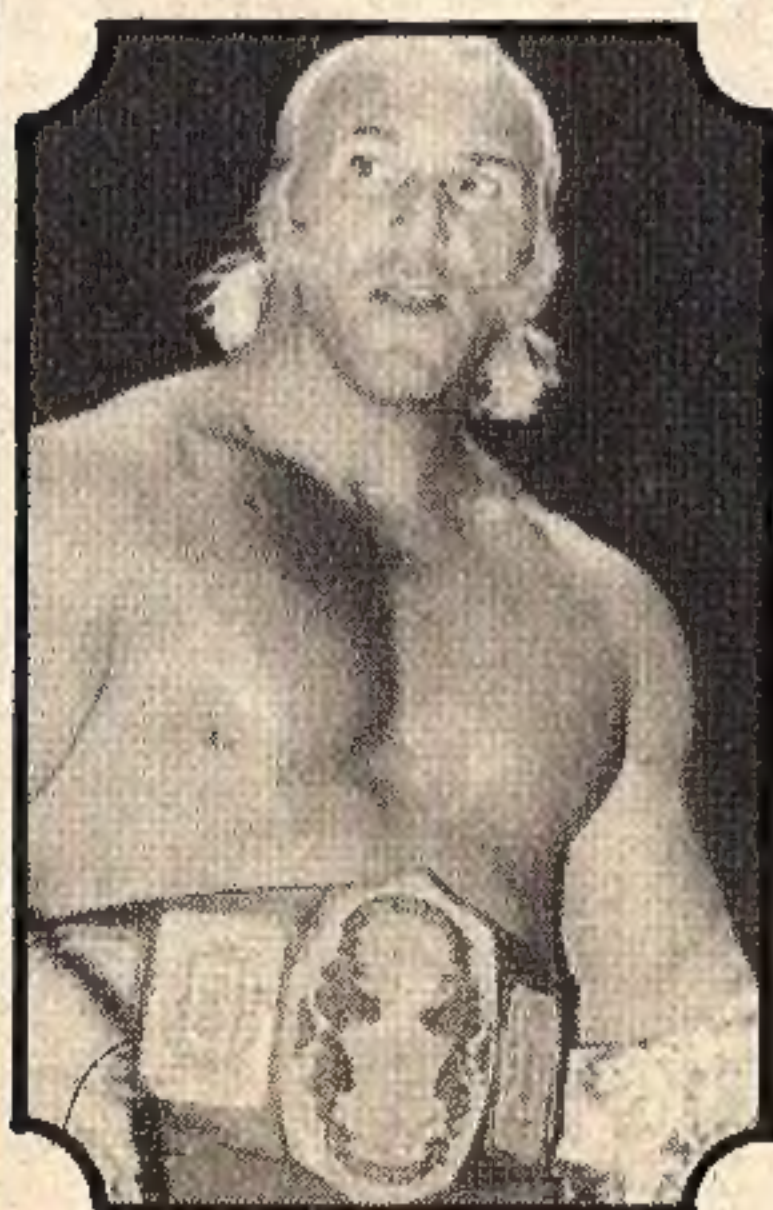
I have to complain about your using the great Captain Lou Albano's "Superstar Portrait" (August 1977) for a dart board. I for one would like to see

(Continued on page 48)

OFFICIAL RATINGS

These Ratings Are Compiled With The Assistance Of Top Wrestlers, Promoters,
And Reporters. They Are Universally Accepted As Official

World Wide Wrestling Federation



Champion:
SUPERSTAR GRAHAM



1—BRUNO
SAMMARTINO

American Wrestling Association

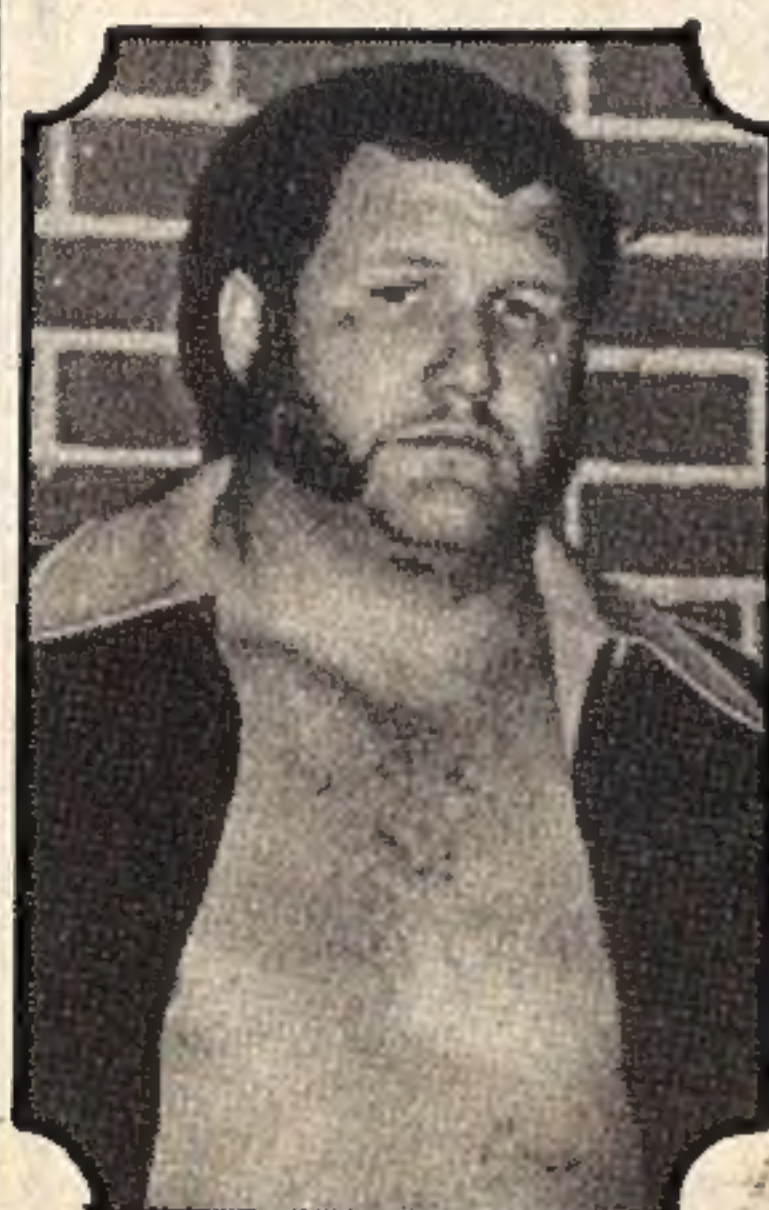


Champion: NICK
BOCKWINKLE



1—BILLY ROBINSON

National Wrestling Alliance



Champion: HARLEY
RACE



1—TERRY FUNK

Most Popular Wrestlers



1—DUSTY RHODES



2—BRUNO
SAMMARTINO

Tag Teams



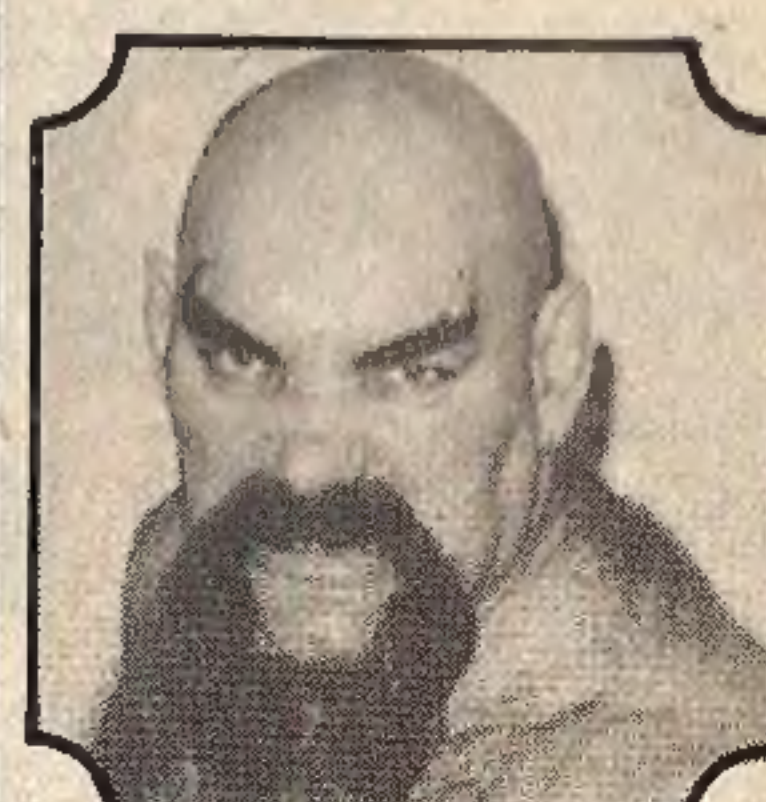
1—THE ANDERSON
BROTHERS



Most Hated Wrestlers



1—THE SHEIK



2—OX BAKER



2—BOB BACKLUND



3—IVAN PUTSKI



4—CHIEF JAY
STRONGBOW

5—PETER MAIVIA
6—KEN PATERA
7—BARON VON
RASCHKE
8—TONY GAREA
9—GEORGE STEELE
10—LARRY ZBYSZKO



2—VERNE GAGNE



3—RAY STEVENS



4—GREG GAGNE

5—JIM BRUNZELL
6—PEDRO
MORALES
7—SUPER
DESTROYER
8—LORD AL HAYES
9—LARRY HENNIG
10—ANGELO MOSCA



2—DUSTY RHODES



3—JACK BRISCO



4—RIC FLAIR

5—PAUL JONES
6—DORY FUNK JR.
7—IVAN KOLOFF
8—THE SHEIK
9—MIKE GRAHAM
10—STAN HANSEN



3—ANDRE THE
GIANT



4—BOB BACKLUND



5—MIL MASCARAS

6—MR. WRESTLING
II
7—IVAN PUTSKI
8—PAUL JONES
9—BILLY ROBINSON
10—MIGHTY IGOR



2—BLACKJACK LANZA
& BOBBY DUNCUM



3—PROFESSOR
TANAKA & MR. FUJI

4—CHIEF JAY
STRONGBOW & BILLY
WHITE WOLF
5—RIC FLAIR &
GREG VALENTINE
6—JACK & JERRY
BRISCO
7—THE VALIANT
BROTHERS
8—VERNE GAGNE
& CRUSHER
9—GOLIATH &
BLACK GORDMAN
10—GREG GAGNE &
JIM BRUNZELL



3—ABDULLAH THE
BUTCHER



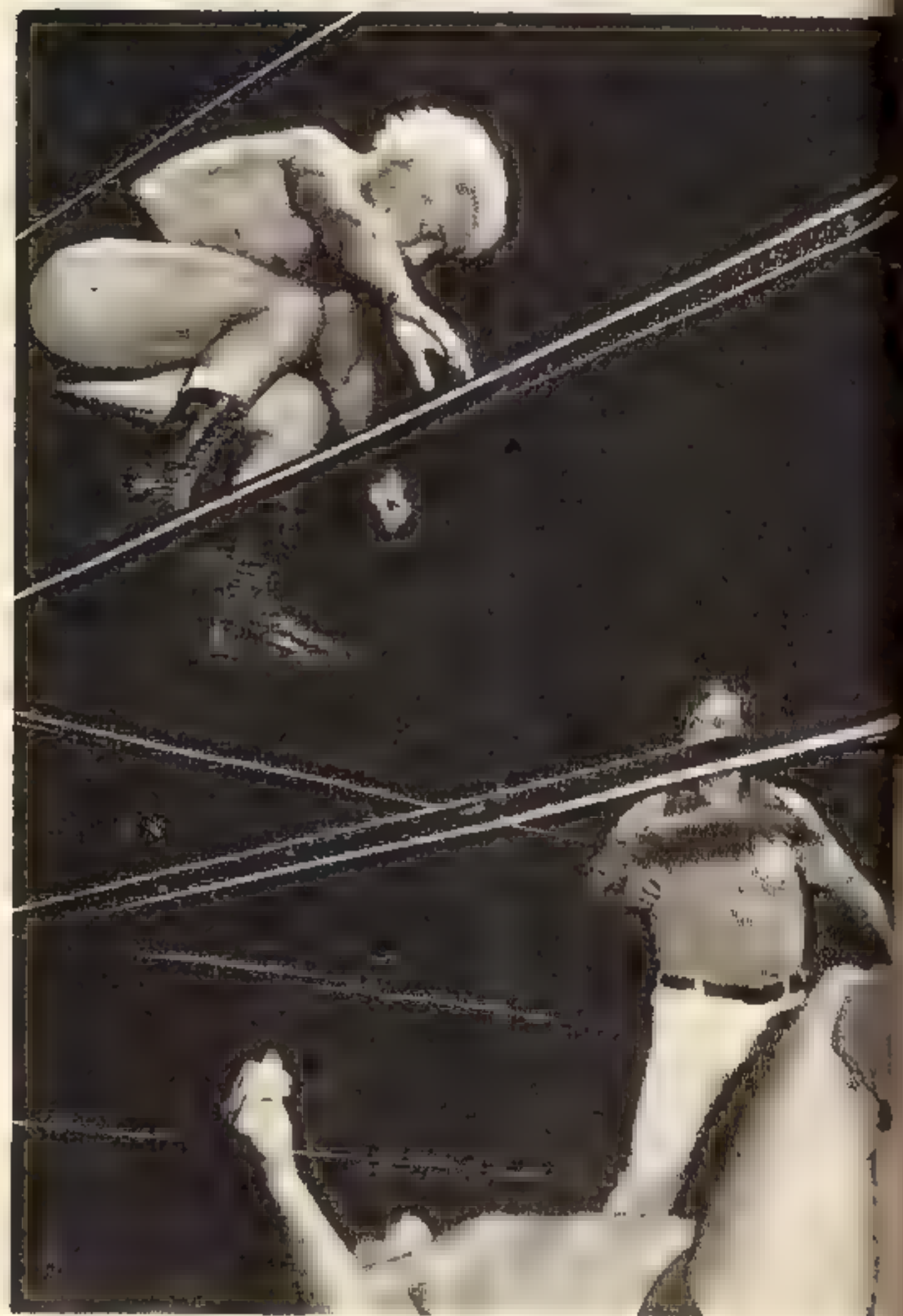
4—KEN PATERA



5—STAN HANSEN

6—RODDY PIPER
7—BRUISER BRODIE
8—SUPERSTAR
GRAHAM
9—NICK
BOCKWINKLE
10—BLACKJACK
MULLIGAN

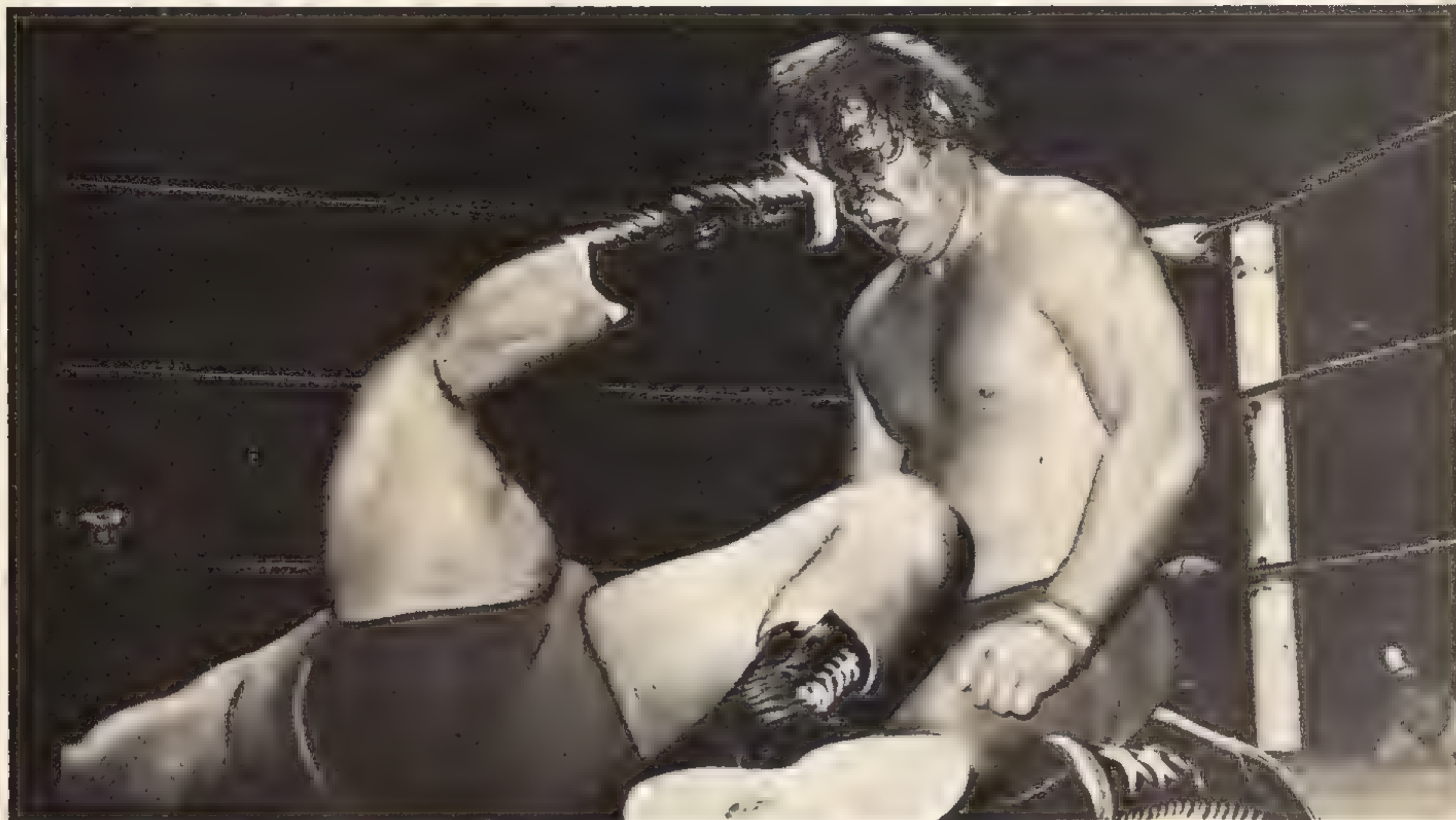
AREA CLOSE UP:



The Sheik takes his anger out on his opponent, Tony Atlas (above), in a match in which both participants were disqualified! It's bombs away as cruel Pat Patterson finishes off Richard Blood (above right). Cowboy Bill Watts is about to deliver a perfect punch to the waiting face of Ole Anderson (left). The respected Mr. Wrestling II (right) arrives at Atlanta's Omni Auditorium. Shortly after this photo was taken, the masked man was spotted by fans and mobbed for autographs.



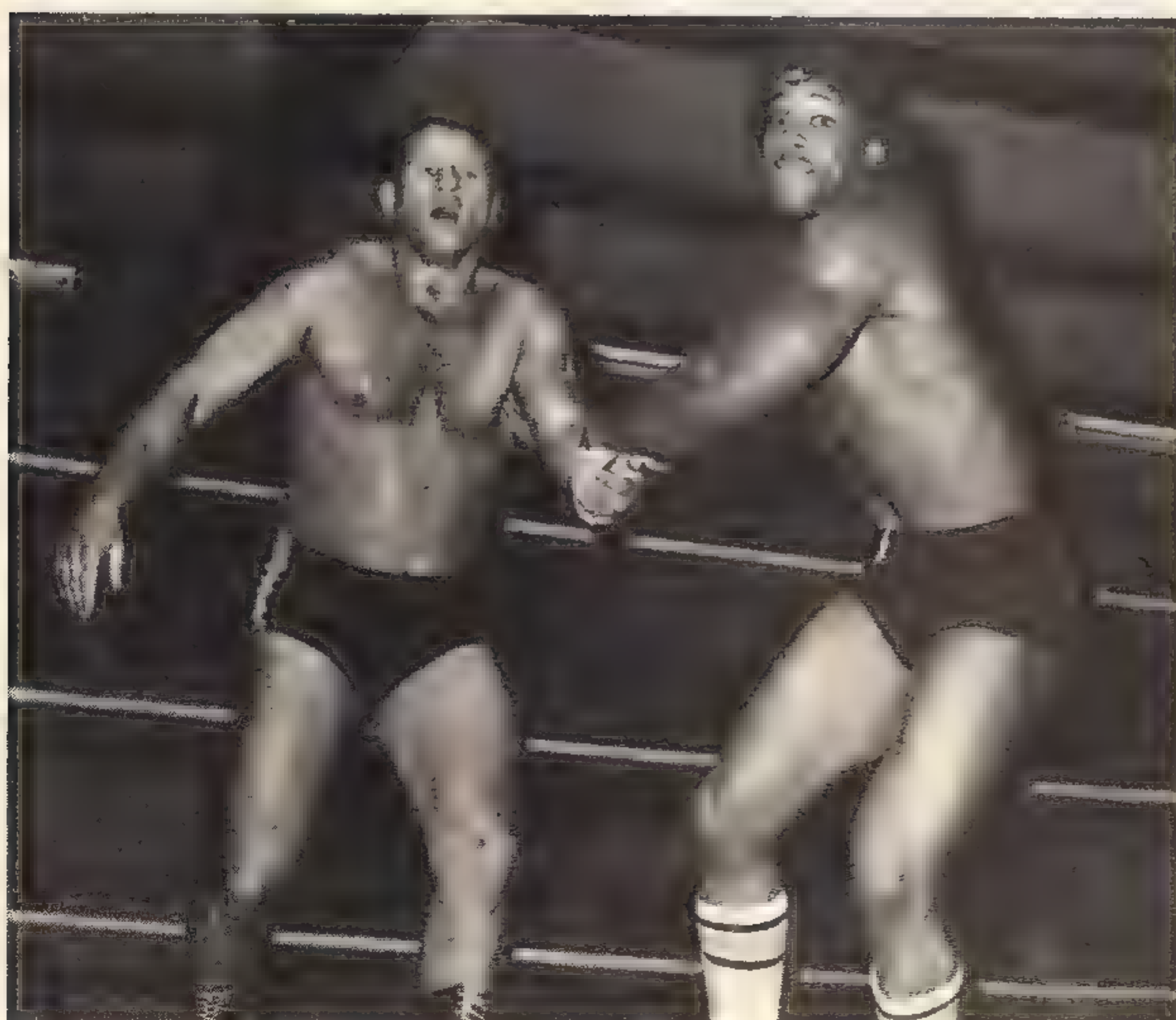
GEORGIA



Paul Jones kicks the bloody face of Dick Slater (above). Their feud has become a classic one in Georgia. Mr. Wrestling I headlocks the French Angel during a wild brawl (right). Popular Paul Jones finds a moment to relax (below) by reading a copy of **WRESTLING YEARBOOK/Summer 1977**. Note who is on the cover!



AREA CLOSE UP:



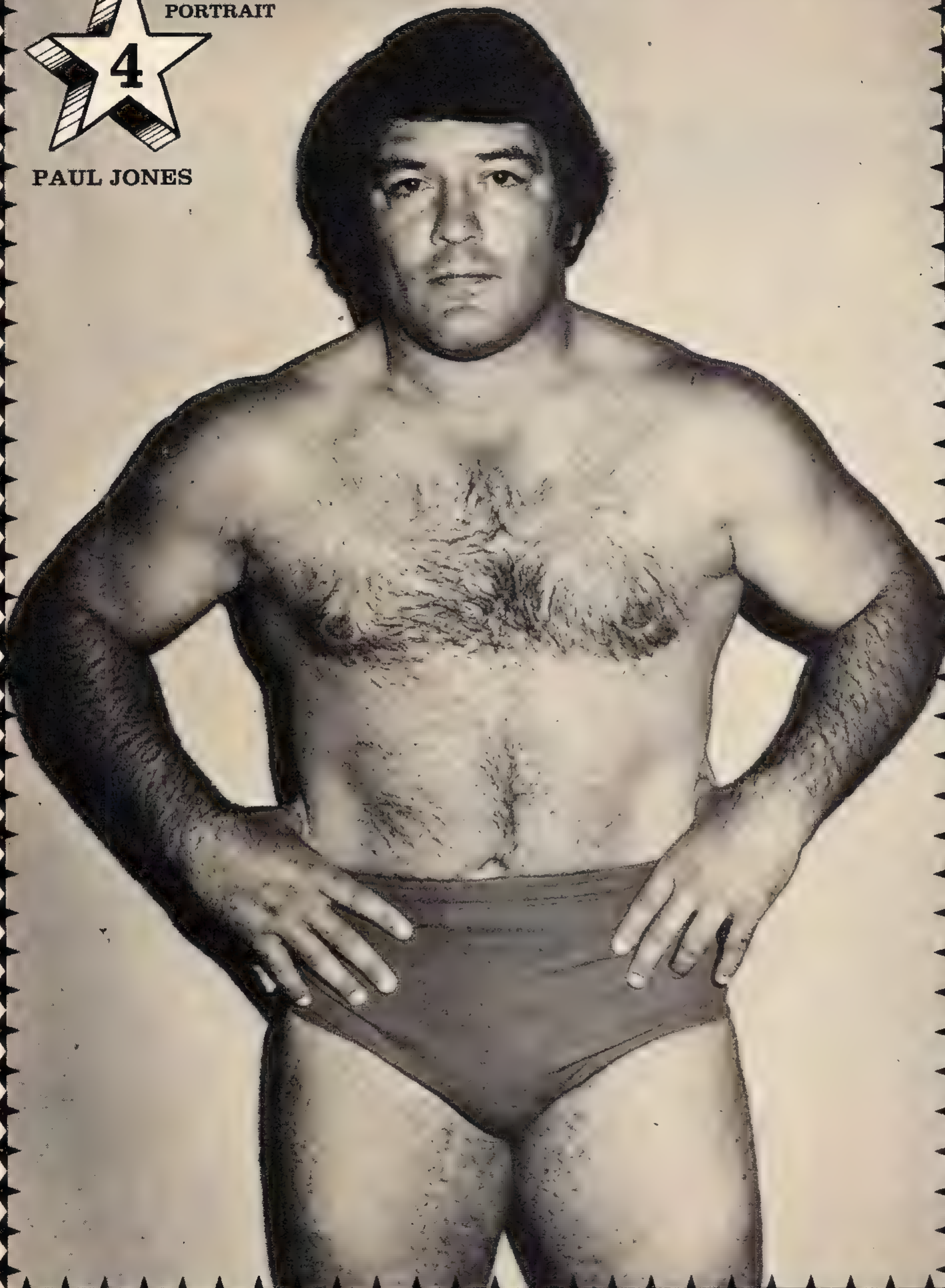
Mr. Wrestling I holds Pak Song (above) while partner Mr. Wrestling II prepares to smash the Korean. Up and coming star Tony Atlas heaves Waldo Von Erich across the ring (left). The U.S. title is ably defended by Blackjack Mulligan (below) as he crushes Rocky Johnson's head.





SUPERSTAR
PORTRAIT

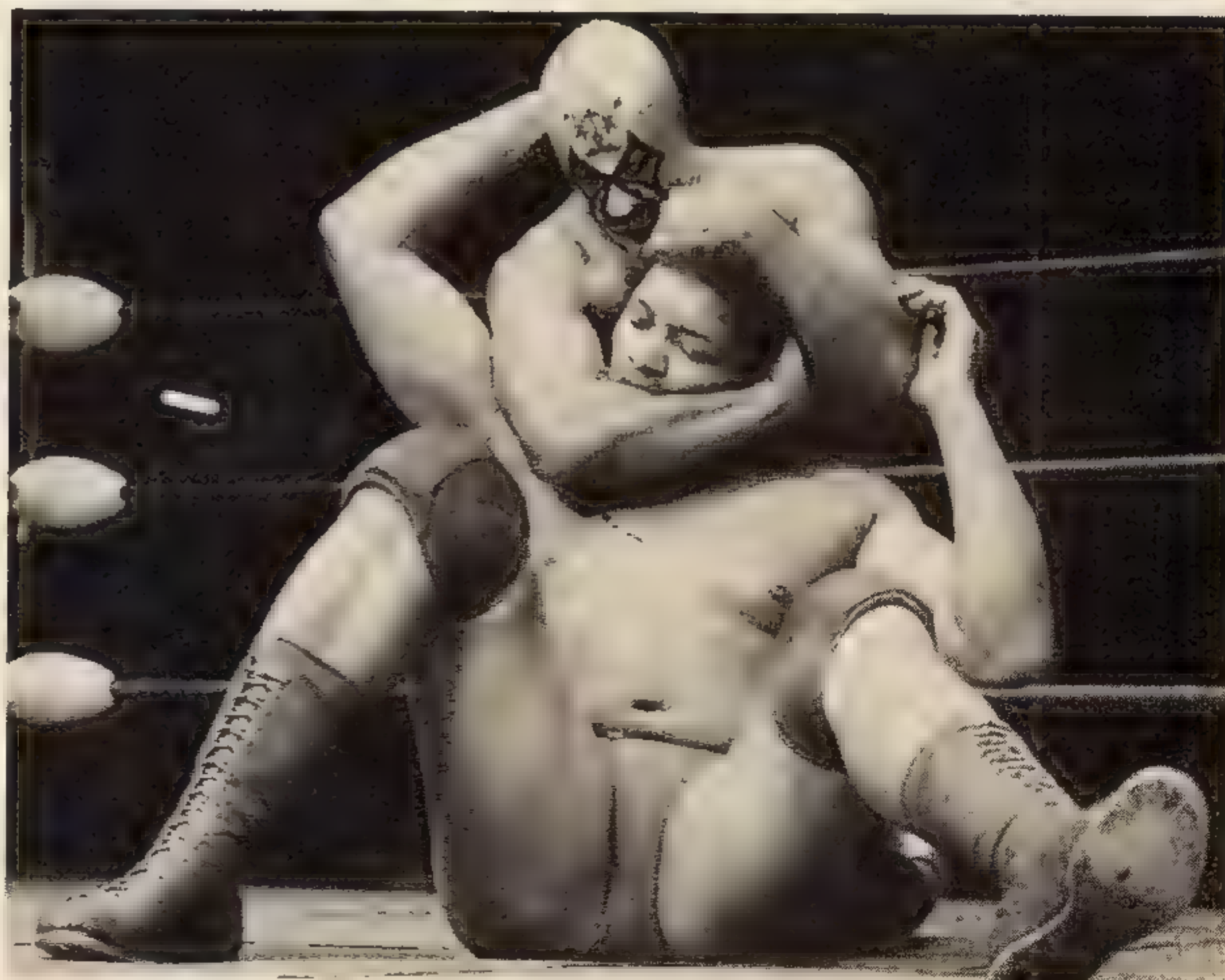
PAUL JONES



MIL MASCARAS' 10 GREATEST TRIUMPHS

Whenever Mil Mascaras battles, the results are sure to be spectacular. Out of hundreds of magnificent victories, 10 emerge as the peak of this fabulous grappler's career. Here are photo memories of these magnificent conquests

AGAINST ERNIE LADD



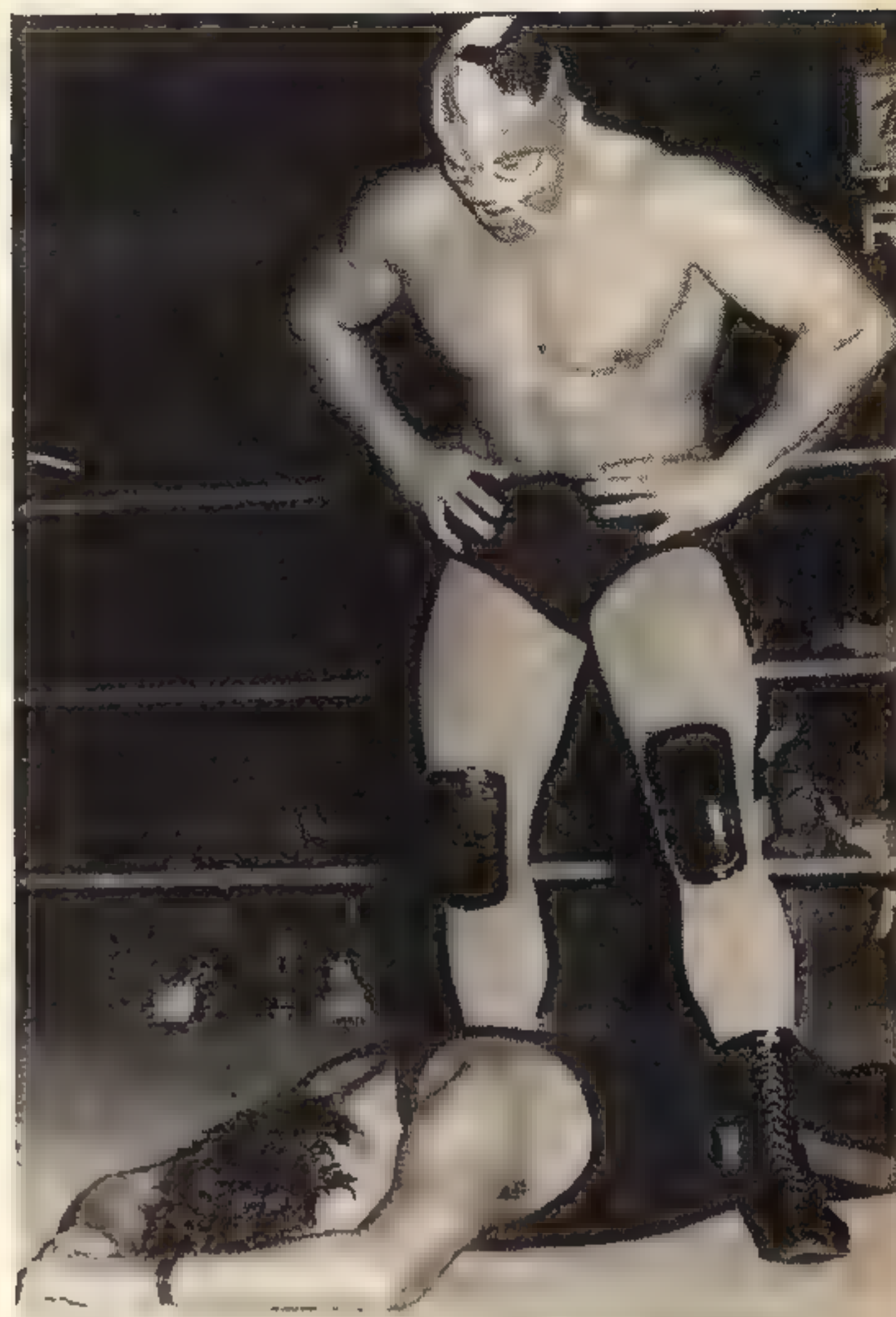
AGAINST LADD

The gargantuan size of Ernie Ladd has proved too much for many top wrestlers. Ladd gave Mil one of his toughest bouts but Mascaras still emerged triumphant. Mil has wrestled Ladd since this 1972 bout, but no subsequent encounter has shown so well Mascaras' skill in cutting down his huge opponent to size.



AGAINST DESTROYER

**AGAINST
BLACK GORDMAN**



AGAINST DESTROYER

One of Mil's toughest rivals has always been Destroyer. In this remarkable encounter, Mascaras overwhelmed his dangerous foe by a series of perfectly executed maneuvers. This photos shows how Mil controlled Destroyer by setting him up for a flying cross. Of all Mil's battles against Destroyer, this one, held in March 1974, was his best.

AGAINST GORDMAN

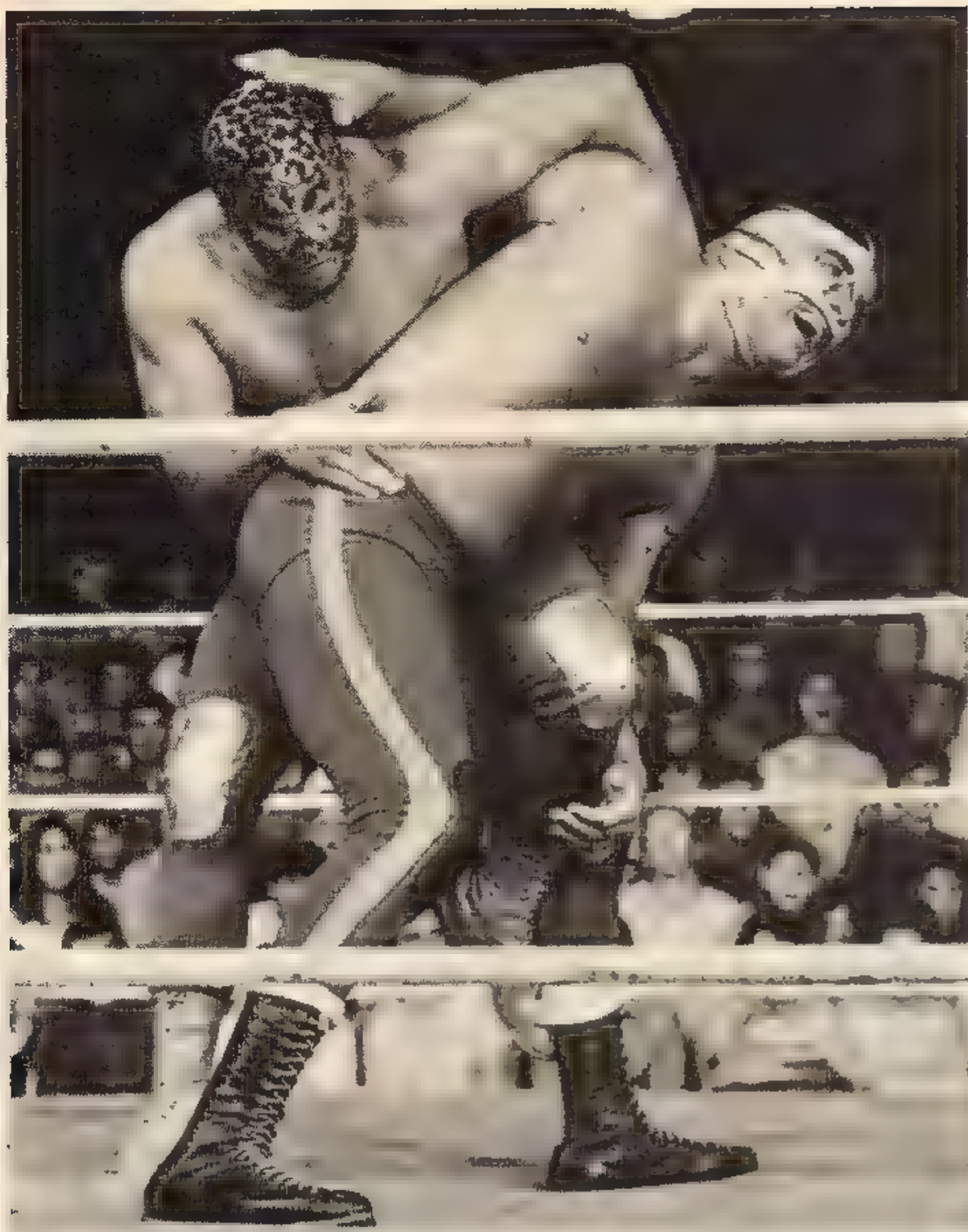
Mil towers triumphant over the fallen body of Black Gordman. This 1969 match saw Gordman struggle savagely, come close to tearing away Mil's mask, but ultimately crumple beneath Mascaras' sustained attack.

AGAINST GRAHAM

The powerful arms of Mil Mascaras trap Superstar Billy Graham in an awesome headlock. Mil's strength had Graham begging for mercy. Though the 1970 match ended in a draw, many people feel Mil proved his superiority over the man who is now WWF champion. It was a brilliant exhibition of wrestling virtuosity by Mascaras.



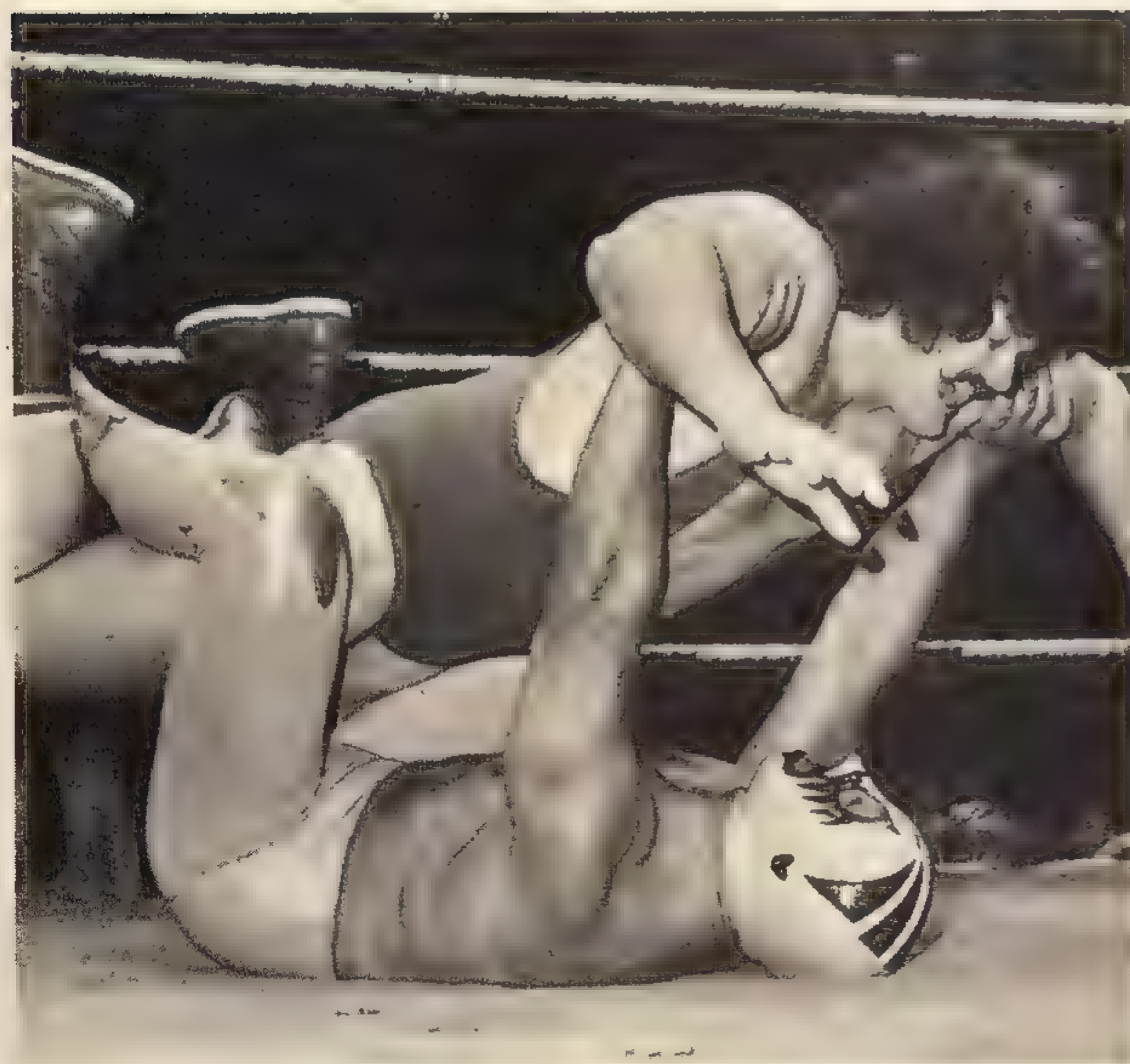
AGAINST BILLY GRAHAM



AGAINST JOHN TOLOS



AGAINST BULL RAMOS



AGAINST DOUG GILBERT

AGAINST GILBERT

Madison Square Garden witnessed Mil's greatness against Doug Gilbert in 1977. Mil demonstrated his remarkable agility and strength against Gilbert's cunning rule-breaking. Few times have people seen the equal of this magnificent display.

AGAINST RAMOS

The flying majesty of Mil Mascaras was never more apparent than in this battle against Bull Ramos. This 1971 bout saw Mil display his flying tactics better than ever. Fans counted over 150 separate maneuvers in 20 minutes. If there was ever a reason to call Mascaras a genius, it was this match.

AGAINST TOLOS

When John Tolos donned a mask to wrestle Mil Mascaras, people wondered if it would have any effect on the Mexican Superstar. Tolos quickly learned Mil's mask isn't the secret to his success. Mil's unequaled agility and strength made Tolos flee to the dressing room. This 1971 battle also proved Mil could match wits with the wily Tolos, an accomplishment few wrestlers can boast.



HATRED SPREAD THROUGH the arena like a fast burning fuse rushing toward a powder keg. The man responsible stood calmly in the middle of the ring, his presence radiating confidence. Under the harsh lights, proud and tall, stood Superstar Billy Graham.

The WWF champion strutted around, daring the crowd to penetrate his armor of ego. While to some it might have seemed a taunting display of conceit, his championship may

depend on just such exhibitions. Graham knows, or at least senses, his most important battle must be waged against the fans.

History has shown the WWF to be especially hard on its rulebreaking champions. Their reigns have been embarrassingly short. Some credit the fans for this. Their hatred for the rulebreaking champions is so apparent it destroys the grappler's concentration. Once that happens, the title is as good as lost.

SUPERSTAR G

HE'S PROVING HIS GREATNESS

Superstar Billy Graham, the WWF champion, is about to send a judo chop at Tony Garea's Adam's apple.

People assumed Billy Graham would lose the WWF belt before it even became comfortable around his waist. But as the months pass, Graham has proven his victory was no fluke. His title reign could endure over the broken bodies of those brave enough to challenge him!



Yet, there is something in Graham—his critics would call it egomania—that makes him invulnerable to the fans. His ability to shut out any consideration but victory has allowed him to do what no other rulebreaker has ever done. He has maintained his rule over the federation.

Many people assumed Graham would fall quickly. Match after match, the new champion has established his dominance over the opposition.

Men determined to take the belt from this notorious rulebreaker have gone down to bitter defeat. Even Bruno Sammartino, living legend and the man who lost his title to Graham, failed to take the champion's belt. As time passes, people have begun to realize Graham is now the major force in WWWF wrestling!

This is a bitter pill for most to swallow, especially those who value dignity in a champion. Some are still choking on the fact. Yet, until someone comes

along to unseat Graham, there is no escaping it. Graham must be reckoned with. The man has proven himself able to defend the title against great adversaries in arenas filled with angry fans.

Why has Graham succeeded where others have failed? Is it really a conceit so powerful no outside influence can penetrate it? Or is there something in Graham which even detractors must call greatness? The facts seem to show the WWWF champion is better than anyone ever suspected.

For years, Graham was dismissed as a man who could never win the big titles. They said he lacked the determination to take the championship. He cared too much for appearance to devote himself to grappling with

GRAHAM:





BOBO BRAZIL



IVAN PUTSKI



JACK BRISCO

a champion's dedication.

When Graham won the championship, these same people said Billy wouldn't have the stamina or mental concentration to keep the belt. A champion has to be different from others, they argued, and Graham doesn't have what it takes to learn that.

From the first match, Graham has proven them wrong. With concentration few believed he possessed, Billy has dominated his opponents. It may have been ruthless, illegal wrestling, but it was successful. Those who thought Graham would fall, including many of his opponents, watched in shock and horror.

"I think we all underestimated him," Chief Jay Strongbow believes, "supposing he wouldn't last a week. That may account for some of Graham's success. No one was ready for him.

"You can't really blame us, though. There was nothing in Graham's past indicating he could be champion. How many times in the past have we seen him struggle in vain to attain a major title? A lot of people considered Billy the greatest waste of talent ever.

"Even when he won the title, everyone assumed it was a fluke. After all, it wasn't an outright win but a gift from an unobservant referee. Graham was probably as surprised as anyone when he found himself champion. When you consider how long any other rulebreaker has managed to stay WWF champion, Billy seemed doomed.

"But weeks passed and no one came really close to taking Graham. Wrestlers began re-examining the new champion. He's a whole different person. Being champion has done remarkable things for him.

"Don't get me wrong, he's still
(Continued on page 54)



HAYSTACKS CALHOUN



TONY GAREA

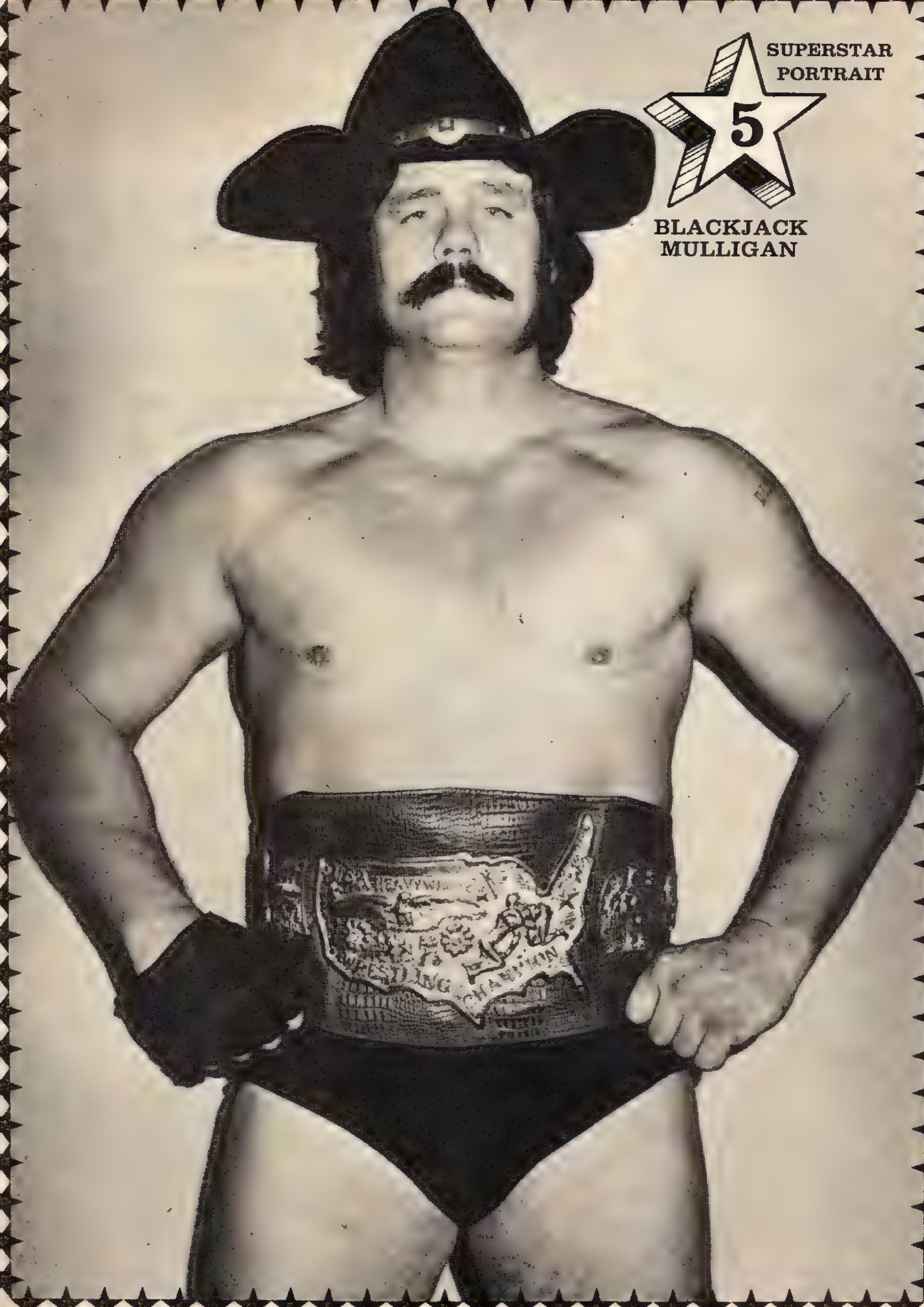


BRUNO SAMMARTINO



SUPERSTAR
PORTRAIT

BLACKJACK
MULLIGAN



These are extraordinary times for wrestling, when many feel obligations to the sport's welfare is the ultimate consideration. To these people, the Brisco brothers are traitors! The reasons behind this incredible situation are sure to shock you



THE BRISCO THE TAG KILLING W

The Brisco Brothers have had their share of happy and sad days (above, below and opposite page). Their worst days may still be coming.



IN BETTER TIMES, the wrestling community would celebrate the tag team of Jack and Jerry Brisco. The brothers are a magnificent coupling, combining the best in scientific maneuvers and athletic instinct. A sport would

delight in their appearance at most times. But these are special circumstances and the brothers Brisco are looked upon as traitors.

Now is the time for all scientific wrestlers to come to the aid of their sport. Rulebreakers dominate the

scene, owning most of the titles and the glory. Scientific grapplers have a duty to channel all their energies into winning a world title belt. Jack and Jerry are going about their business as if the rest of the world doesn't exist.

Other wrestlers are becoming vocal in their disappointment and anger over the Briscos. The brothers have heard their criticism and at first tried to ignore it. But as the whispers turned to shouts, the words grew more bitter and widespread, Jack and Jerry feel compelled to answer their critics.

Actually, it is Jerry who coaxed his brother into answering the profession's criticism. Jack is willing to ignore the remarks "until hell freezes over." Even when he consented to publicly state his case, the elder brother spoke as if daring anyone to criticize him. Jerry is the one who realizes they might not be doing the best thing, although both are convinced they are pursuing the right course.

The brothers asked to be interviewed in the gymnasium. Their schedules are so tight they can't afford to miss even a few hours of training. The men were physically exhausted but mentally alive for their first public statement about the controversy.

Jerry spoke first, since Jack still felt no need for confession. "First, I want everyone to know we don't live in our own private world. It hurts us just as much as anyone else to see Harley Race, Billy Graham, and Nick Bockwinkel as world champions. Nothing would make us happier than to see all three defeated by scientific wrestlers. We realize what's good for the sport is also good for us."

"If you remember," Jack snapped, "I wrestled everyone all over the world as NWA champion. No rulebreaker was too vicious nor any scientific wrestler too good. Everyone got a title shot. Nobody congratulated me on being good for the sport. All they did was

BROTHERS: TEAM WRESTLING





Jack locks Bob Roop in an abdominal stretch during the days in which Jack held the NWA title. Jack was outstanding in single combat and it is hoped he will not become involved in tag team wrestling so often.

insult me and try to take my title. I expect that. But if it's every man for himself when I'm champion, how come it's one for all and all for one when Race holds the title?"

"When you held the title," it was pointed out, "the champions were yourself, Bruno Sammartino, and Verne Gagne, three respected scientific wrestlers. The sport could afford to see one of you fall without it appearing to be a rulebreakers' coup. Now the situation is completely different."

"There is one constant situation in wrestling," Jack countered, "and that's one man pitting his strength against another. If the men are good and the result is a fine match, that's good for the sport. If the guys are lousy and it's a rotten match, that's bad for the sport. So when all is said and done, doing your best helps the sport most. And right now, my best work will come in a tag team with Jerry."

"Would you take a match against Race for the NWA belt?"

"Of course!" Jack replied without hesitation. "I don't like the fact Race owns the title. And if my chance came, I'd take it and hopefully the belt. I'm not afraid of shouldering a champion's responsibilities. I've done it before."

"However," Jack added, "I'm not going to pursue a title shot like I did the last time. I'm tired of running after things. That's what I like about tag team wrestling."

"What I'm doing now is exploring the possibilities of wrestling. Tag team wrestling gives you a whole different perspective on the sport. It helps you look at things in a different way. I feel myself growing as an athlete, something you don't have time to do as champion. Anything that makes me a better wrestler has to help the sport. After all, a sport is only as good as the participating individuals."

"I wish I was that sure," Jerry
(Continued on page 56)



SUPERSTAR
PORTRAIT

ANDRE
THE GIANT



**Fate strikes down a superb young athlete
in his prime. Keeping vigil
over his dying friend is Bob Backlund.
During this time of sorrow,
a life is lost... and a champion is born**

THROUGH THE MAZE of tubes and wires, a young man lay dying. By his side sat his best friend, Bob Backlund. Both were members of the college wrestling team. Bob would have two more years of college wrestling success. His friend wouldn't live to see the summer.

Gil Bowen was considered by many to be one of the greatest wrestlers to ever enter the college ranks. He was one weight class lighter than heavyweight Backlund, another collegiate superstar. Together, they led their college team to its greatest successes. There seemed to be no limits to their abilities.

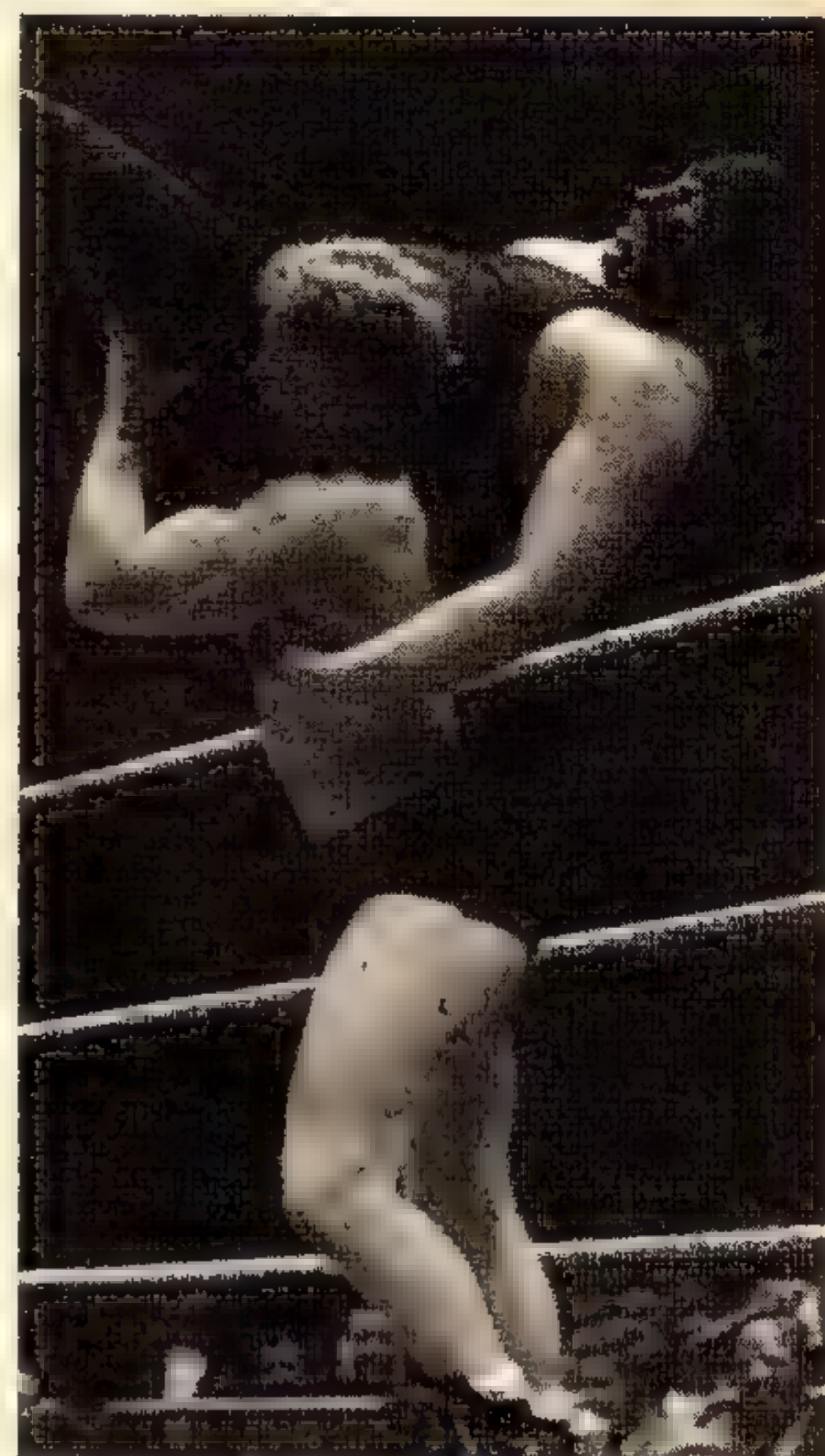
And then, while running laps in the gymnasium, Gil stumbled and fell for no apparent reason. It took him over a minute to regain his feet. The coach immediately sent him to a doctor. That preliminary examination was enough to send Bowen to the hospital. Two weeks later, Gil Bowen was paralyzed from the hips down.

At first, most of the school came to the wrestler's bedside. Then, as the disease dragged on and his healthy body shriveled, people stopped coming by. It hurt too much to see the young man. And more importantly, it scared them. How quickly death takes even its most unlikely victim.

Only one person came each day and stayed until the nurses forced him out. That was Bob Backlund. He stared at his dying friend and wondered if this wasted youngster could actually be the same person. It had to be a mistake! Why, the college

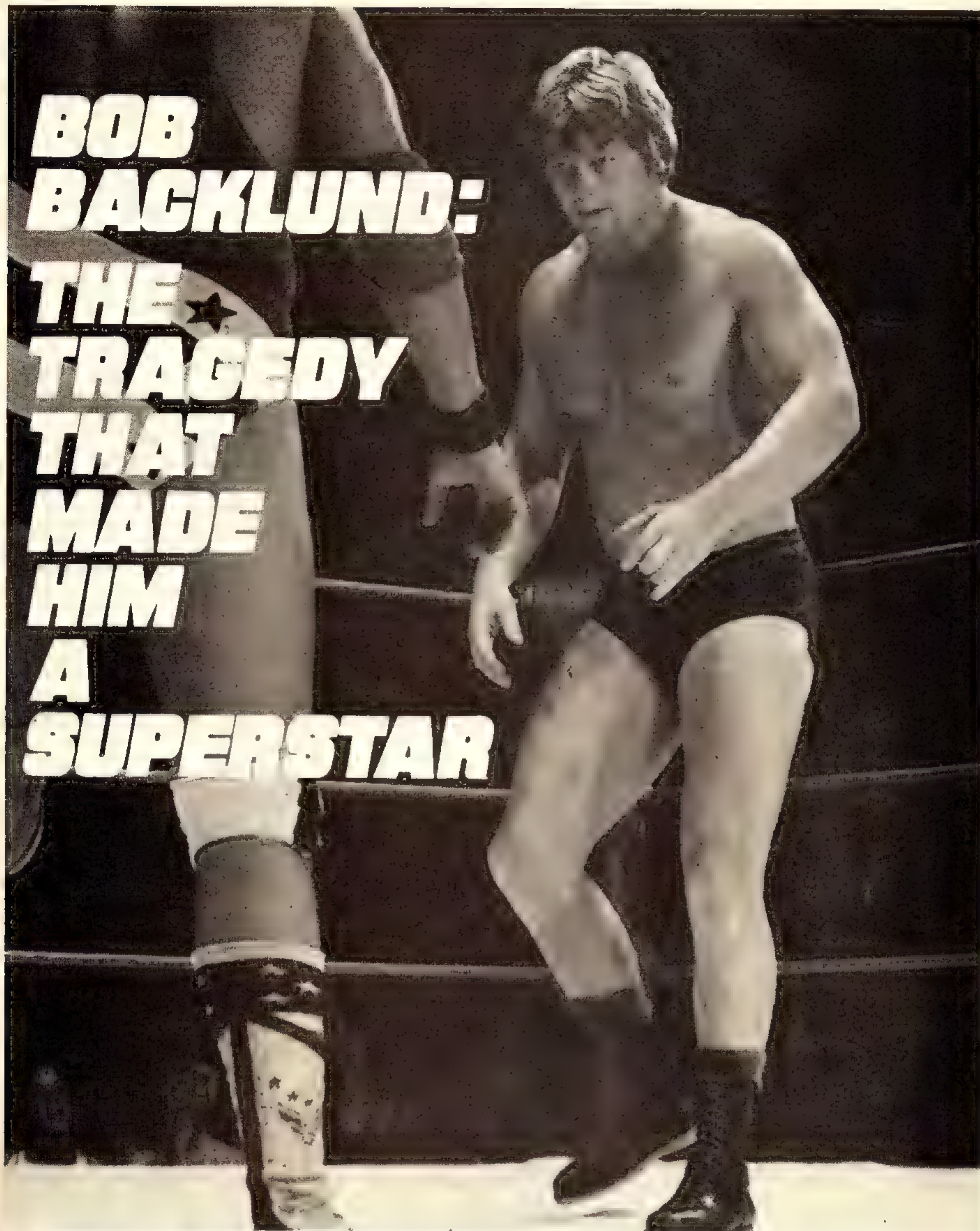
newspaper had printed their photos and called them wrestling's Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. When one started going out with a girl, the most important thing was the other's approval. Now all the girls who had flocked around Gil were going out on dates, laughing, joking, and falling in love. None could find the time to be by a dying friend's bedside.

So Bob waited for hours in silence. Every so often, Gil would try to say something but the effort was too great. Bob would lean over his bed, try to make out the mumbling, and then watch



Bob is inspired to go on to victory (above and below) in his grueling match against The Executioner.





BOB BACKLUND: THE TRAGEDY THAT MADE HIM A SUPERSTAR

his friend pass out from the strain. Still, Bob never ceased his vigil.

"You might as well go home," one doctor told him. "He doesn't even know you're here."

"I know, I'm here," Bob

replied evenly, "and that's good enough reason to stay."

Days passed, and even those moments of mumbling grew fewer and fewer. And then, one day, Gil's eyes opened wide and he almost shouted, "Bob!"

Backlund leaped to his friend's side.

"Don't interrupt," Gil instructed, "I've been saving up my strength for days. I've gone over this speech a thousand times in my head. Before I die, it



Bob uses a flying arm drag to subdue rough Roger Kirby. Bob's career is going excellently. He tries to always think of his good friend who passed away as he climbs higher in the ranks of pro wrestling.

must be said."

Tears welled in Bob's eyes, although his friend couldn't see them. Not knowing anything but what had to be said, Gil continued, "Death thinks it's got me licked. Well, we've fooled it. I may die, but what we've started will live on in you. Anything I might have done, you can do. All the success I might have had will be yours.

"Listen. In the bottom drawer of my desk is a notebook. It's a journal I've kept. Everything I've learned about wrestling is in it. Strategies and maneuvers are described in detail. Also, many things I've been working on are there. I want you to use it, go on from where I began. That way, what means the most to me will live on after I'm dead. I'll sort of be your manager. And I'll always be your friend."

At that moment, a nurse came in and declared, "I think you've

talked enough now. Why don't you rest a while?"

"Rest for what?" Gil snapped. "I'll be doing nothing but resting soon enough. I'm going to use every last minute I can. Now get out. Get out!"

The nurse looked at Bob, as if to say, "If you care about your friend, leave now." But Bob knew caring about his friend meant staying and hearing him out.

"Remember, we used to talk about becoming professional wrestlers. I said it would be the life. You wondered if we shouldn't think about more stable careers. Well, when you look back at your life, you realize the moments of glory are all that matter. Go after it all, the most you can. The only regret I have is not training harder for my matches. I should have given every one the best I could.

"Promise me you'll give every

match your best. And promise me you'll be a pro. Please."

It took Bob a few seconds to answer. He had to choke back the sobs before speaking. "I promise," he finally managed to say. At that point, his friend sank back into unconsciousness. And Bob Backlund wept.

The next morning, Bob entered the hospital to resume his vigil. There the desk nurse told him Gil Bowen had died during the night. Bob didn't cry



Bob has taken all he can from his opponent and now, angered, he prepares to mount an attack.

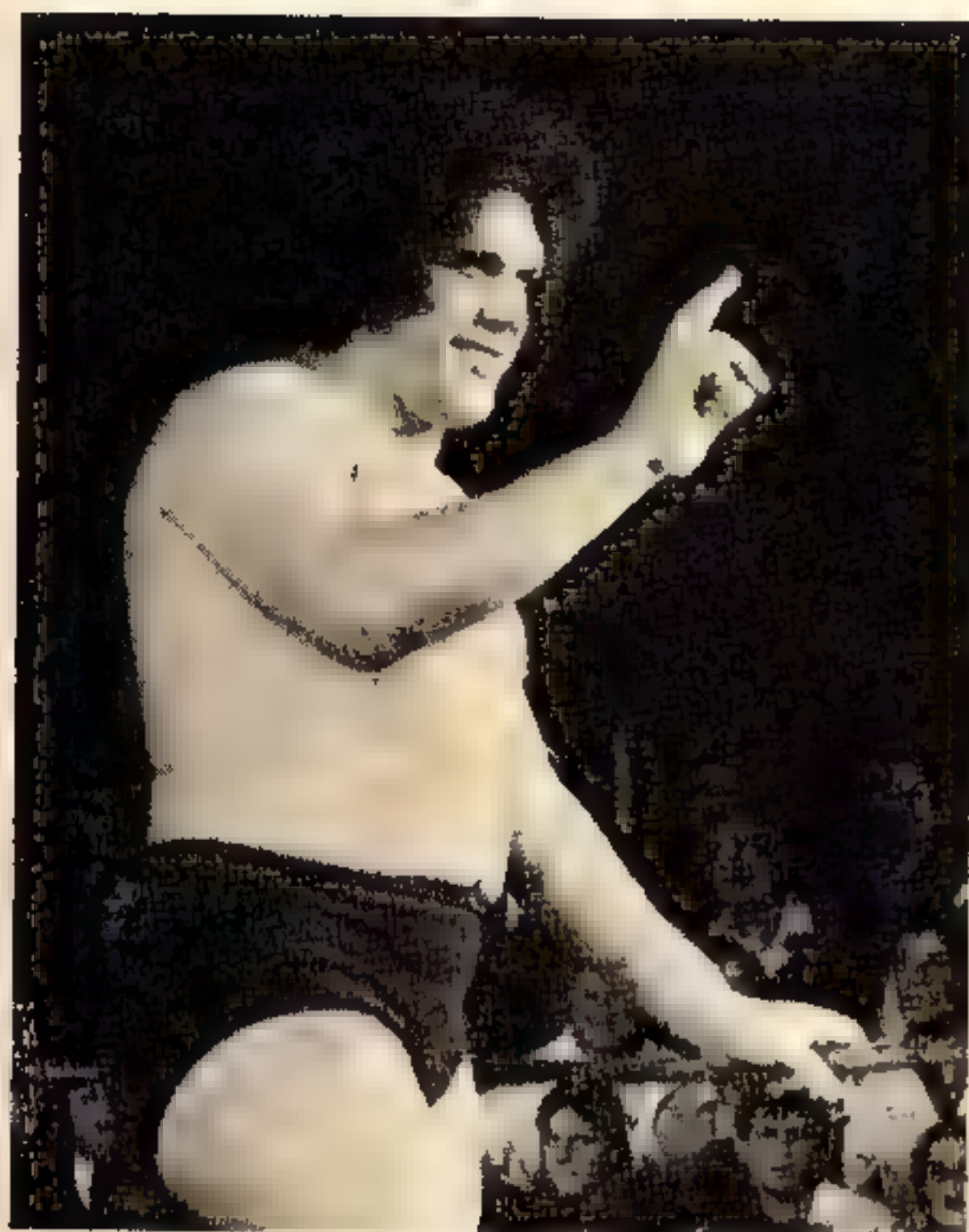
this time. He knew his friend would live on in Bob's future success.

That night, Bob sat down to read his friend's journal. It was a brilliant work. There were many revelations; insights veritably leaped from the pages. When he finished reading it, Backlund felt like a different person. In fact, he was a changed person. The essence of Gil Bowen was now in him.

Bob went on to enjoy one of the most glorious careers in NCAA wrestling history. There

(Continued on page 58)

SUPER STAR QUOTEBOOK



RAY STEVENS: "They're calling me a fan favorite now. After more than 20 years of getting booed, crowds cheer me for going after Nick Bockwinkel. People keep asking me how I feel about this change? Well, I didn't care about the fans when they booed me, and I don't give a damn about them now. I wrestle for one man only—myself."

BOB ORTON JR.: "It doesn't pay to be fair. When I was in high school, the coach stressed sportsmanship. In college, the coach told us winning is everything. I wrestled better in college than in high school. After all, they don't give titles to the man with the most integrity. A belt is won by the toughest guy around. I'm determined to be the champion. Other people can worry about being scientific. There are other things on my mind."

WAHOO McDANIEL: "I've been an athlete all my life. Since seven, I seemed destined to earn a living with my body. A lot of people said because I was an Indian, they wouldn't let me be on any teams. Well, I was so good they couldn't keep me off. That's because I worked harder than the others. If you're good enough, and don't take no for an answer, nothing can stop you. They may slow you down, but they can't stop you."

HARLEY RACE: "Some people call me a wrestling idol. Some people say they envy me. They have no way of knowing how lonesome I can be. I travel around, from town to lonely town. Guess I'll always be just a rolling stone. But I have fortune and fame. A lot of people know my name. That makes it worthwhile."

ANDRE THE GIANT: "At times, I wish I was about six feet tall. Then people would notice I'm an accomplished wrestler, not a giant. Now, everyone is obsessed with my size. Look, there are many guys my height but only one who can make it as a professional wrestler. I wish people would recognize I'm an athlete first and foremost."

JOHN TOLOS: "I'd be much more successful if I bowed down to the promoters. They don't like guys who wrestle when and where we want. So the lackeys get the title shots. I don't grovel for anything. It makes me sick to see a dog beg. A man should die first."



DOUG GILBERT: "People often ask me why I break the rules. I have to laugh in their faces. What rules? Those silly regulations meant to inhibit a man from really wrestling? Those idiot limitations designed to protect the crybaby wrestlers who couldn't punch their way out of a paper bag? I don't break the rules. I just make my own."

BUDDY ROBERTS (HOLLYWOOD BLOND): "Tag team wrestling is the best part of this sport. Wrestling alone bores me. In a tag team, the possibilities are much greater, the ability to experiment is more available, and the action is rougher. This is the way man was meant to wrestle!"

JIM VALIANT: "I owned wrestling once and I can do it again. No force on earth can stop me. If I have to break a man's back to prove my power, then that's one dead opponent. No one can stop me now. I'm hungry for success, but I won't be hungry long. Consider yourself warned, world." □

SUPER STAR INTERVIEW

TERRY FUNK

Like the little girl with the curl, there are times when Terry Funk can be very, very good. And there are times when he can be absolutely rotten. He is one of the most complex men in the sport today. At the present time, Terry is trying valiantly to regain the NWA title he lost to Harley Race early this year. So far, his efforts have been unsuccessful. But once Funk becomes determined, nothing can stop him. He is at an important crossroads in his life right now. This interview was conducted to find out just where the former champion is heading.



Toronto I could barely walk. I was rushed back to a hospital in Texas where special surgery had to be done. It was painful, but I survived. After a month's recuperation, I was back in action. I only wish I knew what he did to me during that match. I would like to do the same to him.

Q: Has this injury affected your wrestling?

A: Not in the least. I'm better than ever. No one can put Terry Funk out of commission. I may have been

Q: How have you been doing since you lost the belt?

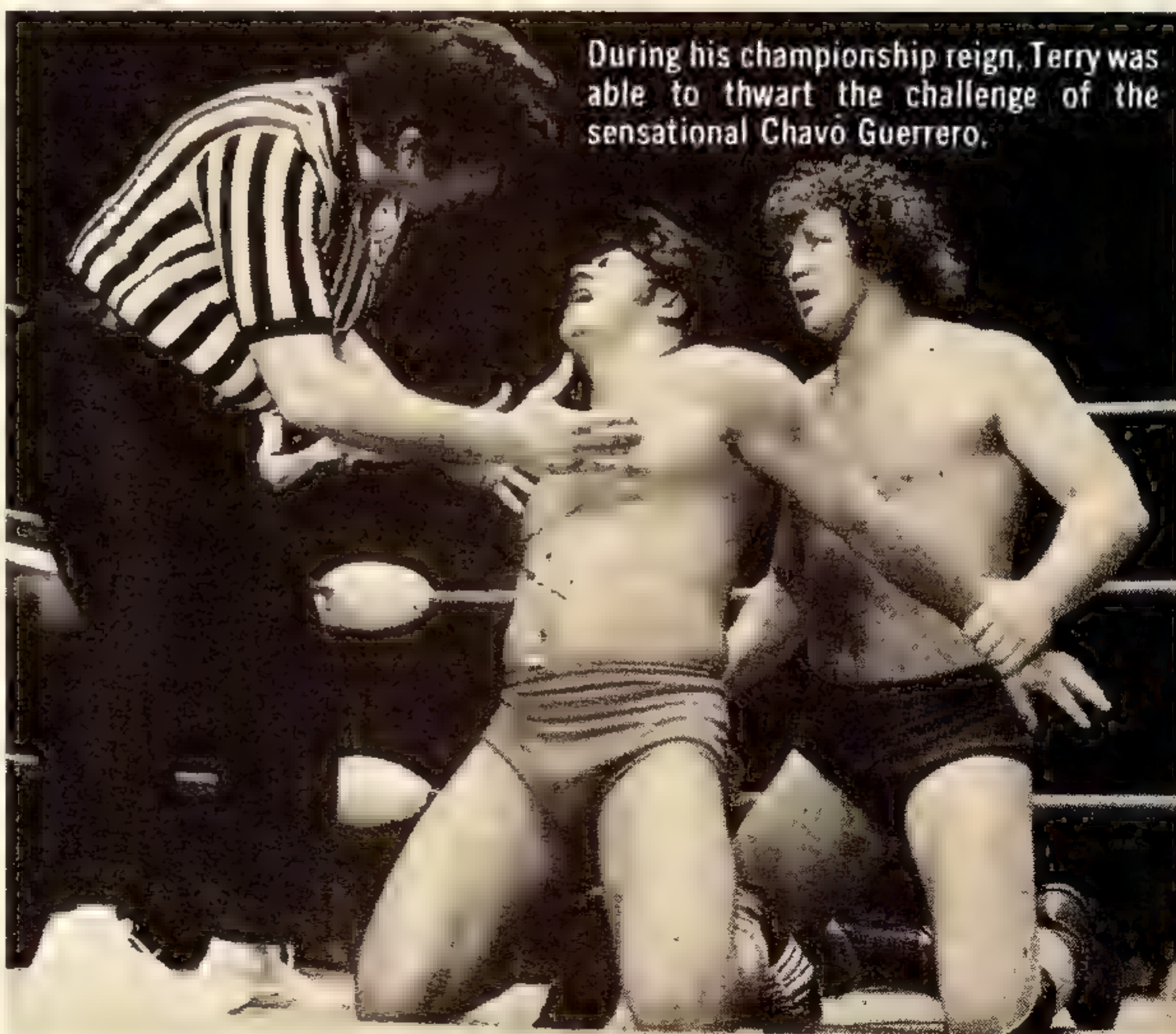
A: I've managed to get along. Anyway, it won't be long before I have the belt back.

Q: We'll get to that in a moment. First, what happened to you after you lost the title. It seems you disappeared from sight for several months. No one heard from you. Where were you?

A: There's no reason to keep it a secret any longer. I was in the hospital.

Q: Why?

A: That skunk Harley Race did something very illegal in that title match. Somehow he managed to cripple me. He used some illegal maneuver on my leg. After the match in



During his championship reign, Terry was able to thwart the challenge of the sensational Chavo Guerrero.

sidelined temporarily, but I bounced right back. Now I'm as good as ever.

Q: In your title match against Race, you did something very unusual: you submitted. Why?

A: Let's get something straight right here. I never submitted. The referee made a very drastic mistake. He thought I had given up, when I just had

“

I was no disgrace to the title. I brought it more honor than anyone else in history, with the possible exception of my brother, Dory.

”

grunted. I would never submit. I could have gone on. I would have beaten Harley Race.

Q: Really? After all, you just said Race did something to injure your leg. How could you have gone on?

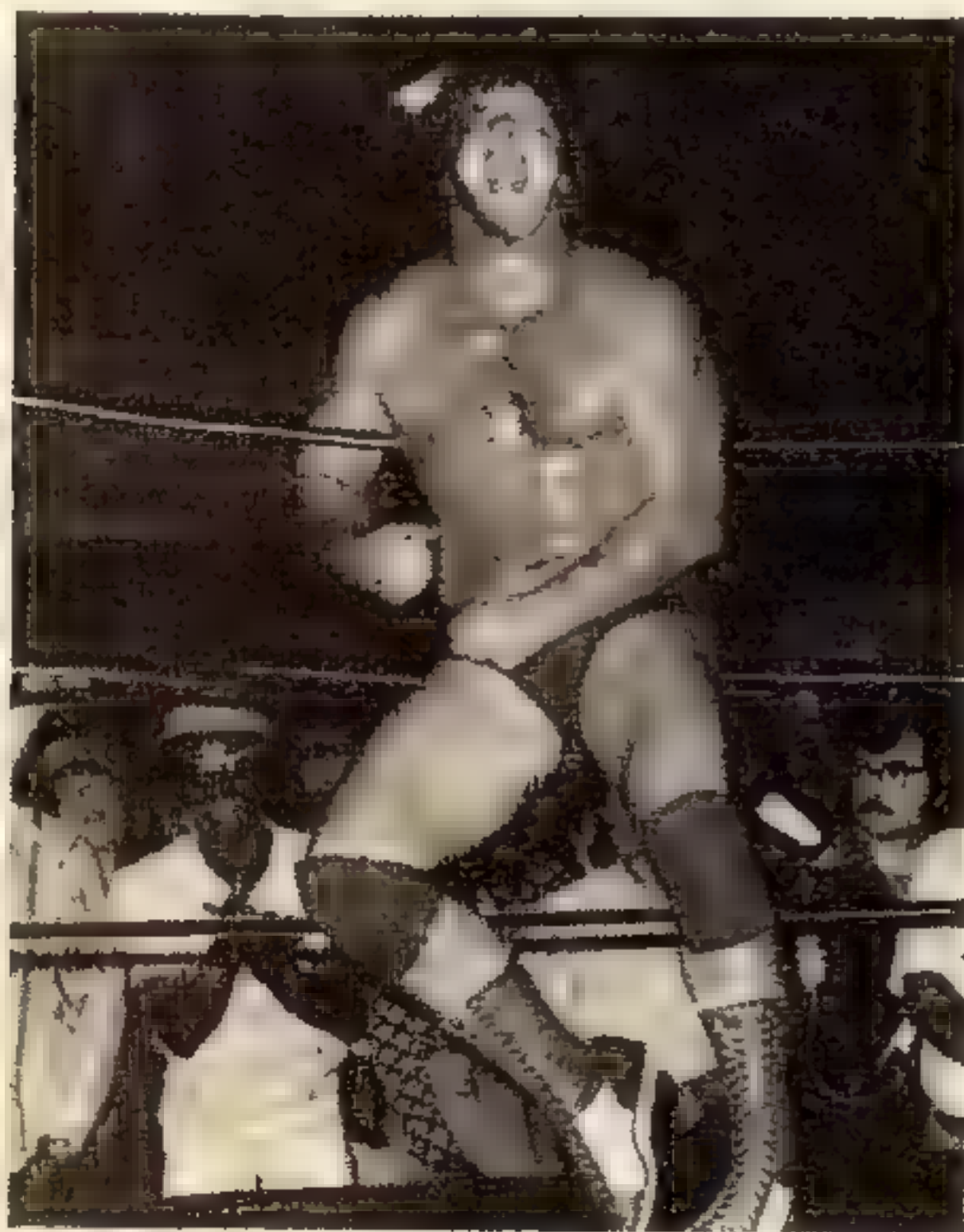
A: A champion can always go on! Pain means nothing when a title is at stake. That mistake by the referee is unforgivable. By all rights, I should still have the title. But I'll have it back soon enough.

Q: How soon is that?

A: It's hard to tell. Harley Race is sneaky. I've seen him in action since he's become champion. I don't like what I've seen. Do you know Race will purposely get himself



Rocky Johnson is just one of the men who almost won Terry's NWA title (above). A beaten man, Terry still managed to retain his title after the beatings (below).



disqualified to save his title. I never did that.

Q: Never?

A: Well, hardly ever.

Q: From what you've seen, do you think you will be able to regain your belt? Or could it be that Harley Race is just a better wrestler?

A: Are you kidding? Harley Race a better wrestler? I have

never heard anything so dumb in my life. That man is garbage. He's a disgrace to the title. I'm surprised the NWA didn't strip him of it after his first title defense.

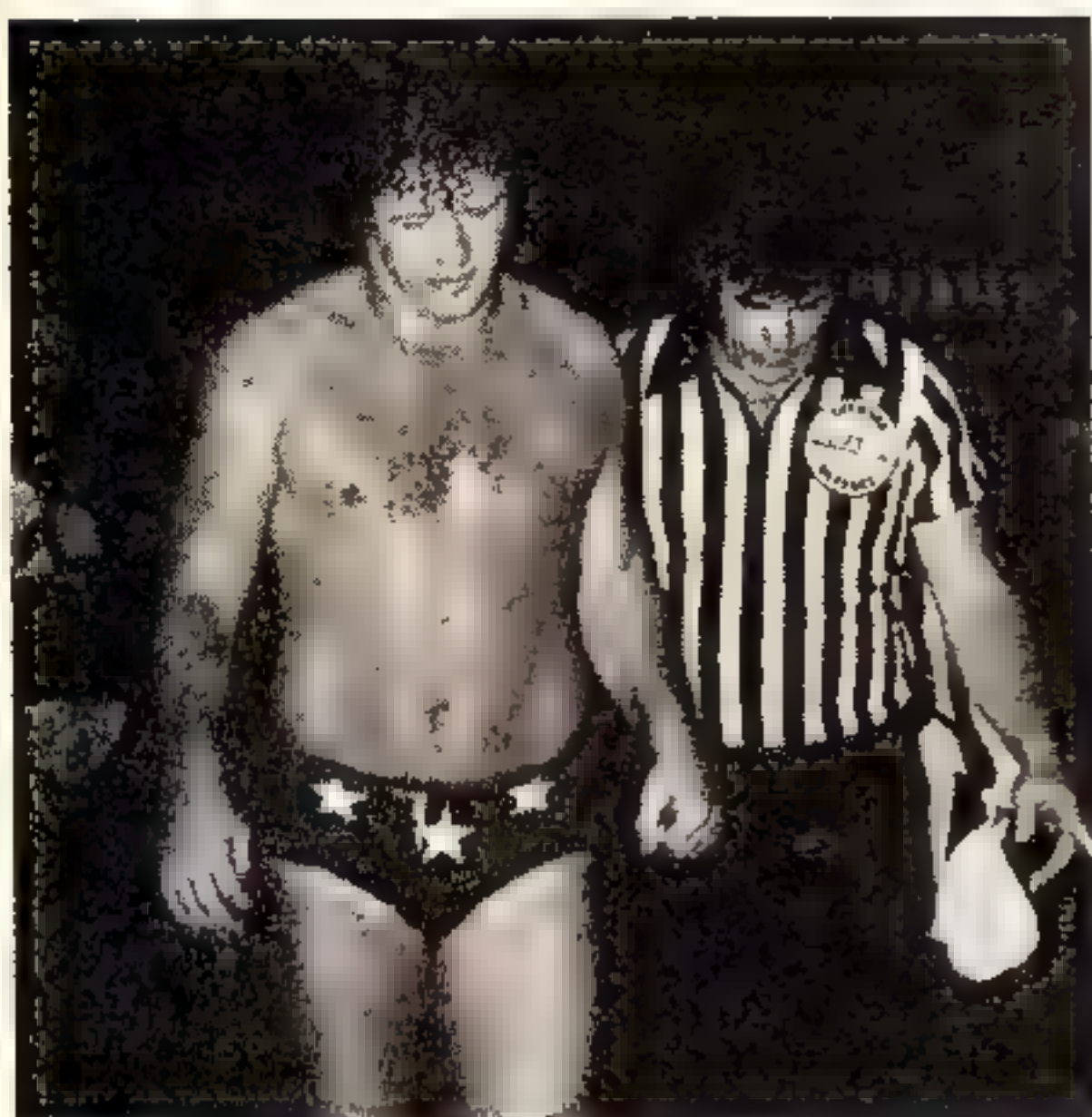
Q: Many people said the same thing about you.

A: Who? I was no disgrace to the title. I brought it more honor than anyone else in history, with the possible exception of my brother, Dory.

Q: Right now, it seems the number one contender for the belt is Jack Brisco, the man you defeated for the title. Do you think he could win the belt?

A: Anyone could win the belt, even Jack Brisco. Don't get me wrong, I'm not praising Brisco—the man can't wrestle to save his life—I'm just saying that Race is that bad. Jack Brisco isn't much better, but he did beat Race once before for the championship. He could probably do it again. And if

SUPERSTAR INTERVIEW



After a particularly exhausting defense, Terry is escorted back to the dressing room (above). A moment when Terry takes charge (below) in the match in which he lost the title to Harley Race.

Brisco should accidentally win the belt before I have the chance to, then I will simply take it from him. It will be the easiest thing I've ever done.

Q: That is a bit hard to believe. After all, in a recent match against Jack, you could do no better than draw.

A: I had an off night. Everyone is entitled to an off night.

Q: What about your draw against Bob Backlund?

A: What about it?

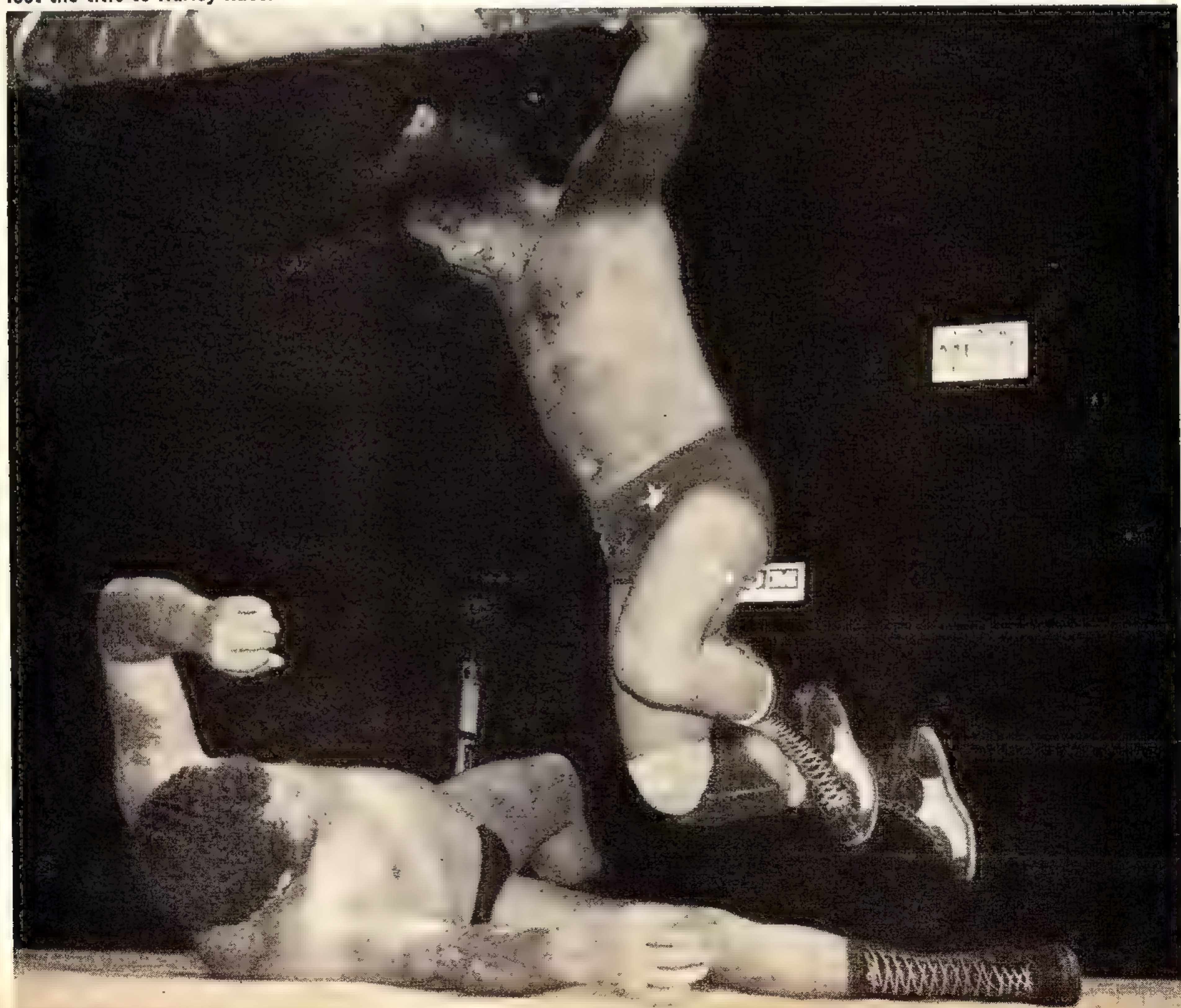
Q: He's young and relatively inexperienced. You are a

seasoned veteran. Don't you think you could have won that match?

A: It's funny about Backlund. He may be young, but he is good. I don't like to admit that. In any case, he deserved a chance. I don't mind having drawn with him. I could do much worse.

Q: But with all these draws going on your record, aren't your chances for a title shot diminishing? Why should the NWA allow you to go for the title now?

(Continued on page 64)





SUPERSTAR
PORTRAIT

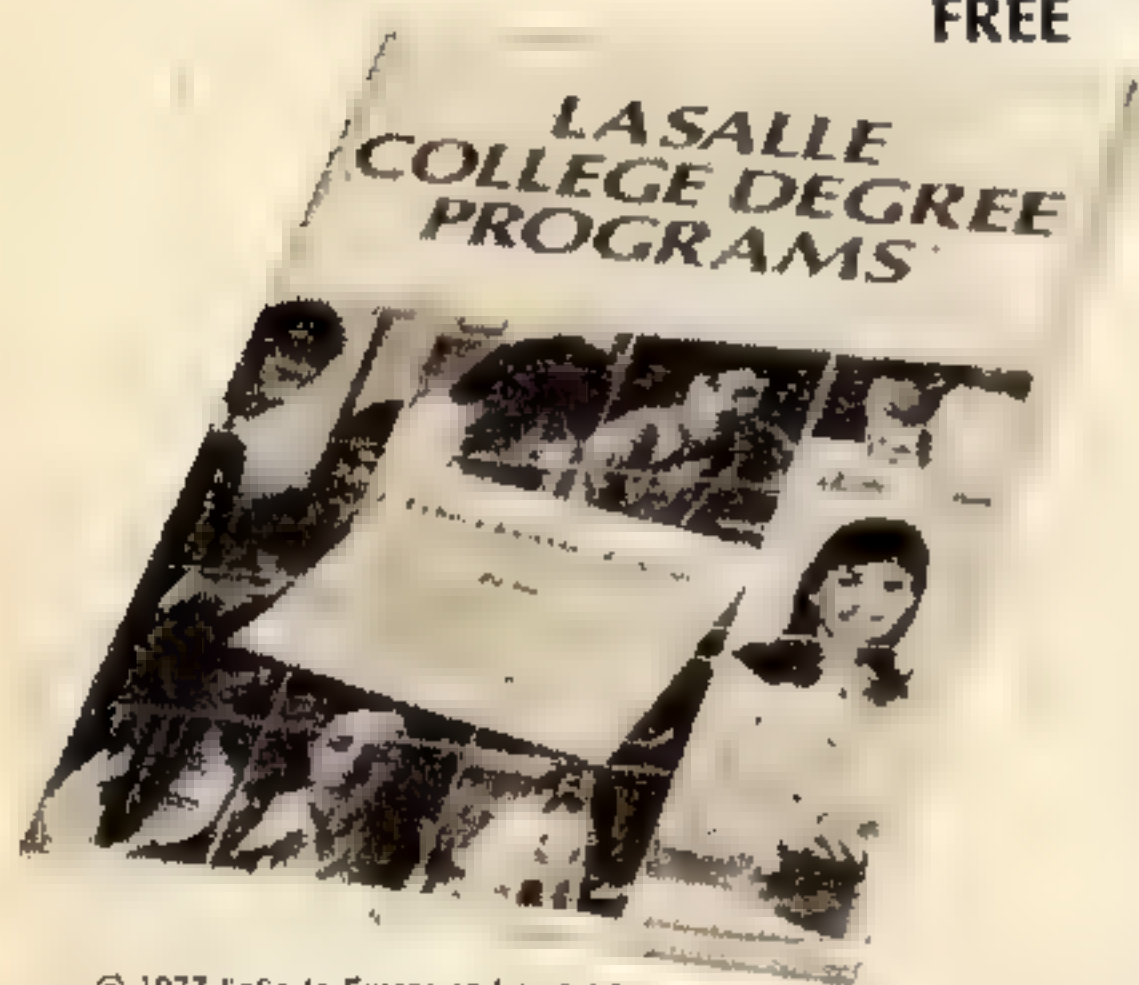
TERRY FUNK



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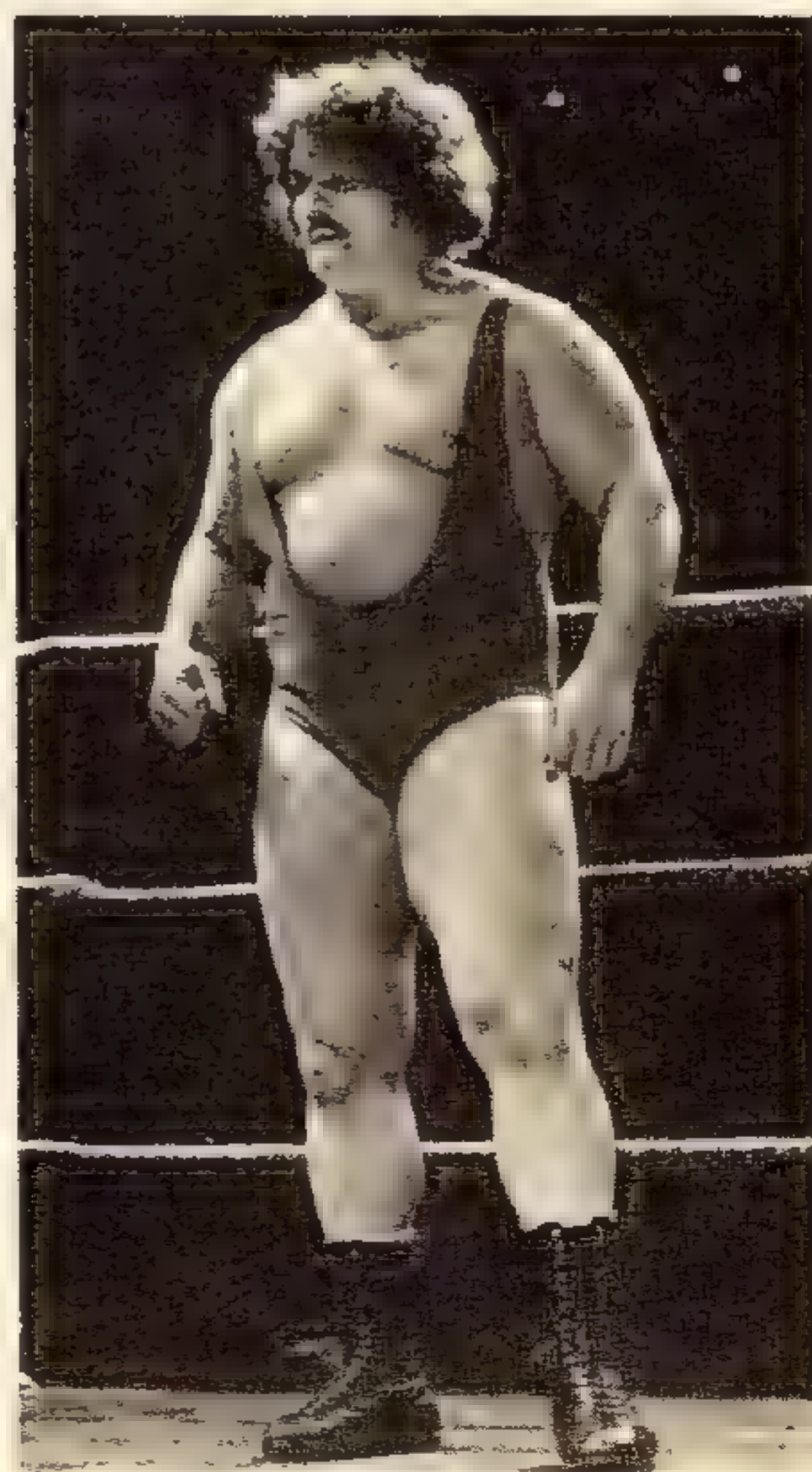
22Z

STAR GAZING

(Continued from Page 13)



Is disaster right around the corner for Abdullah (above, biting Mr. Wrestling II)? Doug Gilbert (below) may have a serious personality change soon.



wrestler who travels far to battle him is a great danger. He should only confront those whose actions he has studied. Any surprises could be fatal.

When one examines Abdullah the Butcher's chart, a few things become shockingly evident. He is vulnerable to any wrestler whose birth falls under a water sign. This means disaster could be right around the corner for him. This situation arises because Abdullah's Saturn is in conjunction with Venus. If he fails to heed this warning, he does so at his own risk.

Next we come to Doug Gilbert, a complex man whose chart is a series of contradictions. To predict Doug's future I consulted the *I Ching*, the Chinese book of prophecy. Gilbert's hexagrams, the construction used to map out the future, point to great upheaval within the next year. He could undergo a startling character change, but I cannot tell in which direction. Tsi Ar-Kai, the venerated *I Ching* scholar, tells me not to look into the *I Ching* for the answer but to Gilbert himself.



In good conscience, I cannot reveal what the charts say for NWA champion Harley Race.

Last, we come to Nick Bockwinkel. The reason I waited until the end to discuss him will become obvious. The man has been through a very trying year, being both AWA champion and Bobby Heenan's virtual slave. The stars predicted powerlessness at time of great success, as came to pass. Now the stars are pointing to an even greater paradox. It appears Bockwinkel will be saved by his greatest sorrow. First, Mercury will have a negative influence, to be quickly followed by Saturn's positive influence. The two conflicting planets will exert their presence until Bockwinkel is locked in the most confusing time of his life! It should be fascinating to watch.

Fans have written to me with their own observations and predictions. Many I find fascinating while others are most disturbing. One reader mapped out Harley Race's chart and came up with some surprising results. Though I agree with the findings, I cannot in good conscience make them a matter of public record. ☐

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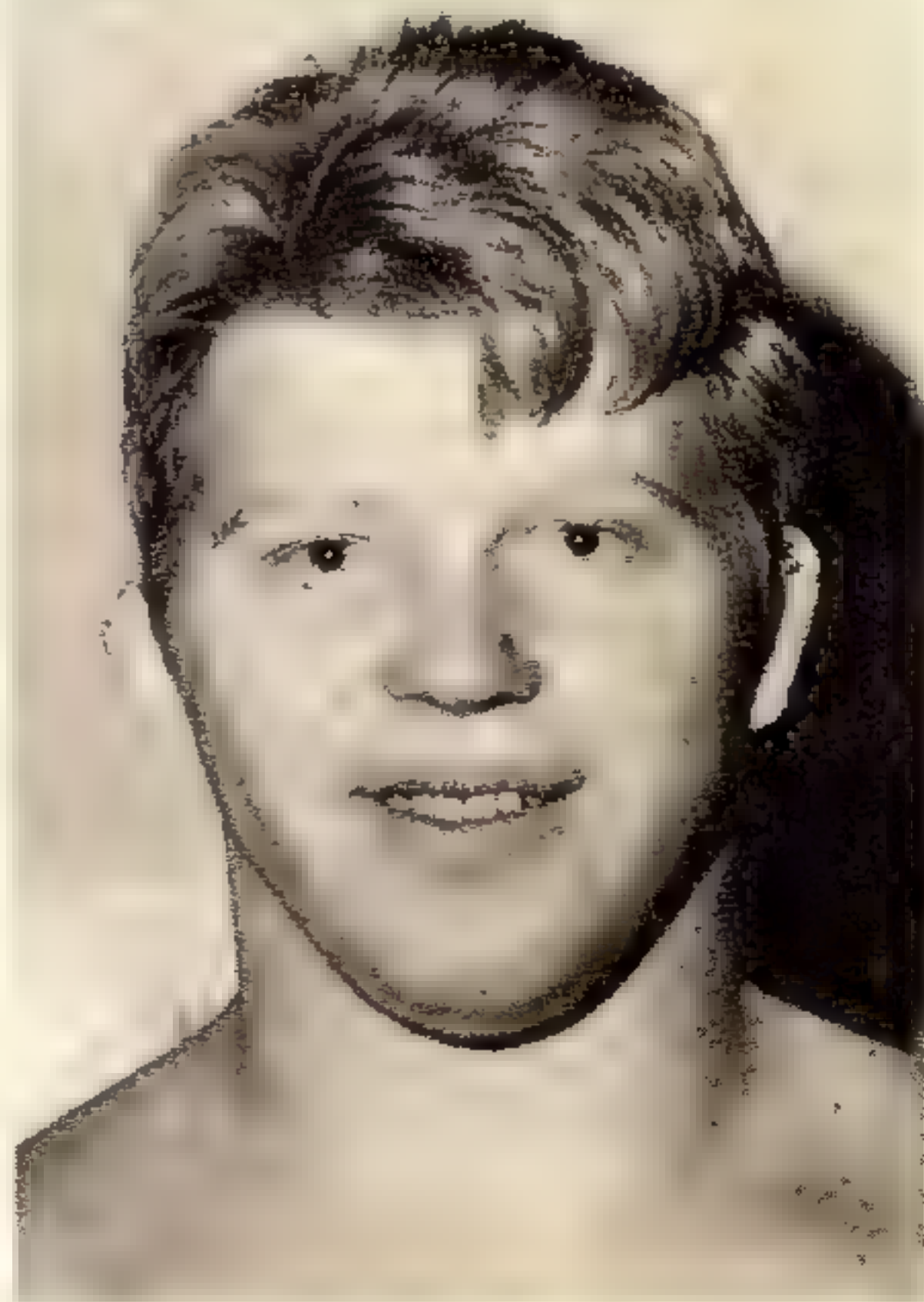
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FAN FORUM

(Continued from Page 18)



Mil Mascaras dropkicks The Outlaw (above). Should we make a dart board with Bob Backlund's face (below) instead of Captain Lou's?



superstar portrait dart boards of so-called fan favorites like Chief Jay Strongbow, Billy White Wolf, Bruno Sammartino, Bob Backlund, Larry Zbyszko, etc.

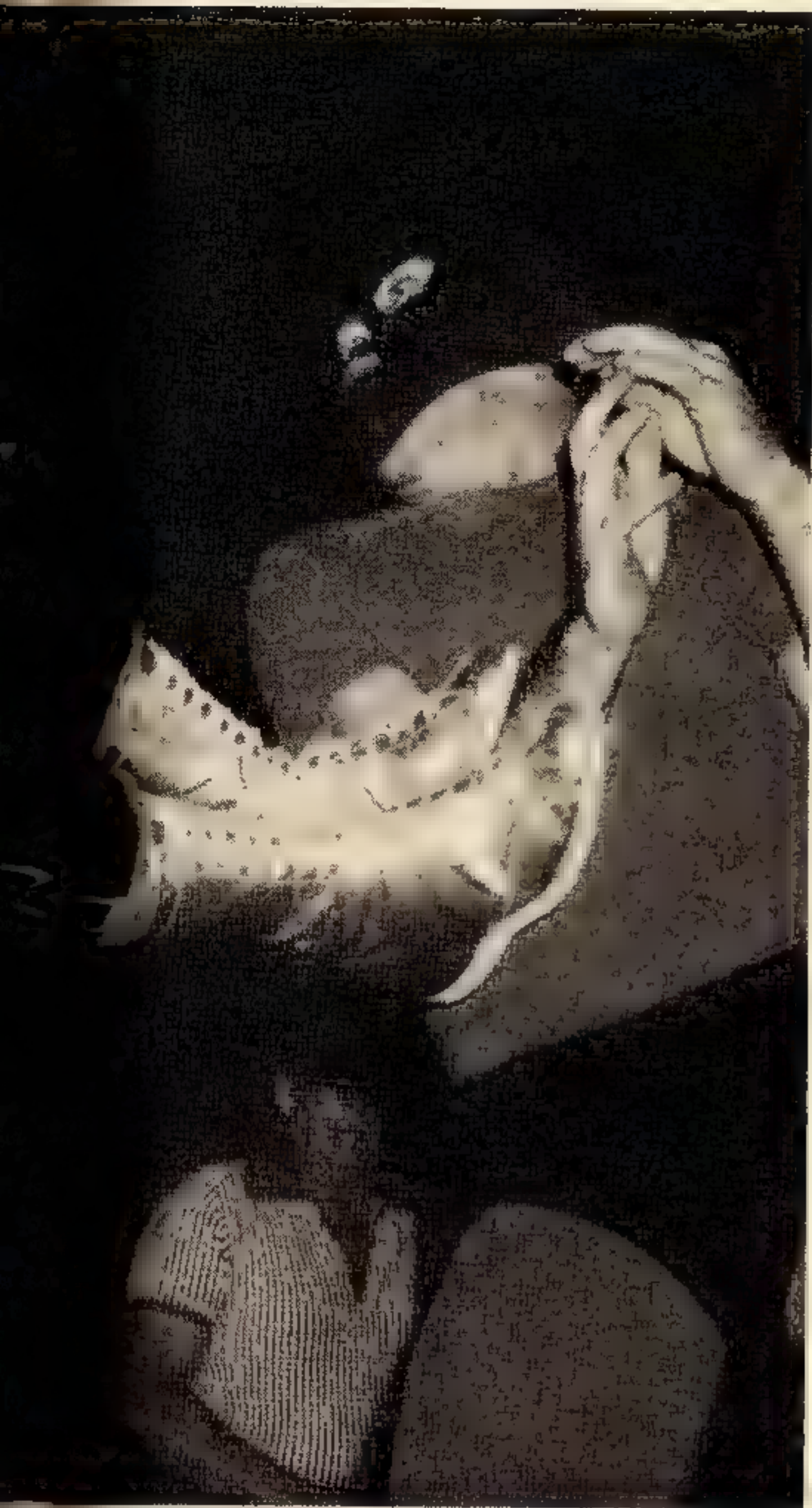
It is not fair of you to use Albano's portrait for a dartboard just because you don't like him and his tactics. I think Captain Lou is Number One. Without him, wrestling would be nothing.

Lou Albano is the maker of champions. He is the guiding light.

JIMMY REICH
Sayreville, N.J.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

I have just finished reading "Mil Mascaras: The Fear Behind the Mask" (August 1977) for the



third time. I still find it very confusing. What does it all mean?

I cannot understand why Mil has suddenly become so concerned about his retirement from wrestling. That time should still be several years away. And of course people will still venerate him once he has stopped wrestling. His fears are groundless and silly.

As a long-time fan of the masked wrestler, I do not feel any particular need to see him unmasked. Therefore, there is no reason why he should. He can be assured that his millions of fans feel the same way.

SANDY TRIPOLI
Boulder, Col.

(Continued on page 50)

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FAN FORUM

(Continued from Page 49)



Everyone loved "Andre the Giant's Ten Greatest Triumphs"—even Andre (above)! Superstar Graham (below) offended many fans with his bragging.



TREASURED TREASURY

"Andre the Giant's Ten Greatest Triumphs" (August 1977) was a terrific feature, and I would like to thank you for it. Every fan of Andre will treasure it for a long time to come.

Considering some of the men Andre has beaten—Ernie Ladd, Don Leo Jonathan, and Abdullah the Butcher—it is no wonder he

is considered one of the greatest wrestlers in the sport today. All these men are tough opponents. A lesser man would never have been able to survive matches with them.

Again, let me thank you for a great treasury of Andre's best triumphs. It was fantastic.

GREG YERKES
Tyler, Texas

NEVER!!!

It was bad enough when he won the title, but I was really disgusted when he started bragging and braying. "Superstar Graham: 'Now Bruno Is Second Best'" (August 1977) was the kind of unnecessary boasting to which I refer.

I don't care what Graham says. I will never believe he is better than Bruno Sammartino. He isn't even in the same class as the living legend. Anyone who says otherwise knows nothing about wrestling.

There will never be a day when Superstar Billy Graham will be considered a great wrestler. And there will never come a time when Bruno is second best!

LINDA FIELDS
Vestal, N.Y.



It is predicted that Ivan Putski will win either the NWA or WWWF title within the year.

POOR IVAN

Your in-depth story, "Ivan Putski: Torn Between Two Titles (August 1977), was an excellent analysis of the situation in which Ivan now finds himself. In very concise terms, you have examined the problems Ivan is now facing, as well as offering suggestions for solving these problems.

Within a year's time, I predict Putski will be wearing the title belt of either the WWWF or the NWA. But if he wants to do this, he will have to soon make a choice between the two associations. I hope this decision is soon forthcoming.

I don't feel Ivan's problems here will lead to his downfall, as your article stated. However, I do feel he will be able to do much better once this situation has come to a satisfying conclusion.

BERT BECKETT
St. Louis, Mo. □

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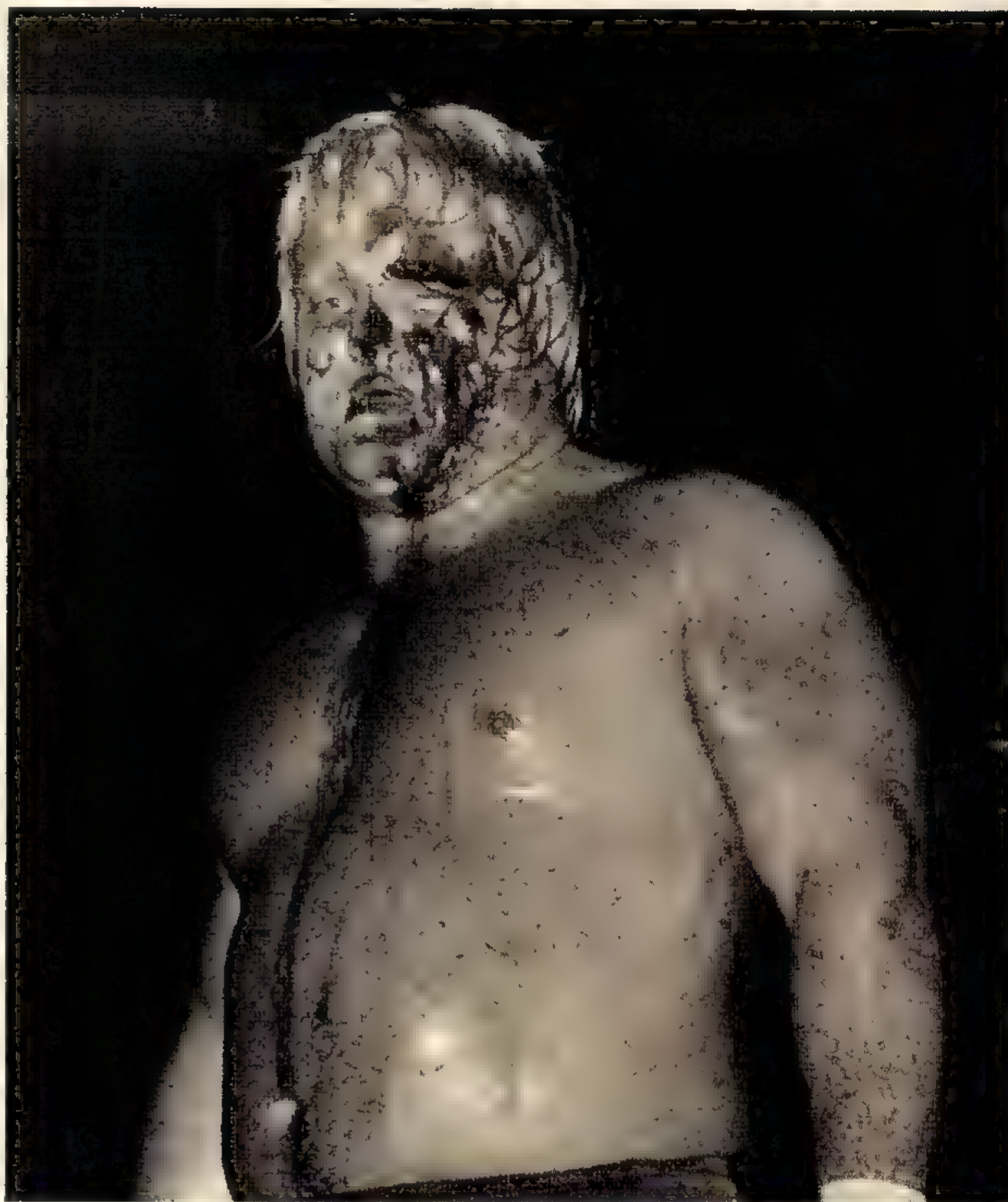
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SUPERSTAR GRAPEVINE

(Continued from Page 8)



Greg Valentine hopes that "pyramid power" will prevent things like this (above) from happening to him again. Greg is sure his new fad will help him win the NWA title.

Speaking of tag teams, Mr. Fuji and Professor Toru Tanaka claim to be in the final stages of developing the most brutalizing tag team maneuver ever. A spokesman for the pair claims the move should be ready for combat by November. He darkly hinted the victims might never recover from its effects.

* * *

The consequences of Superstar Billy Graham's ascension to the WWWF title are still being felt. One apparent change involves the champion himself. Graham, known as a

man who can't leave a party before everyone else does, is spending most of his time at home or in the gym. When asked if this restrained lifestyle will be common during his title reign, Graham replied, "I don't have to party anymore. Those wild times were only to forget I wasn't champion. Now, I want to remember it all."

* * *

If you're looking for a wrestler with a unique idea about winning, check out Greg Valentine. The man has decided



Bob Orton Jr. has his opponent helpless. Bob now refuses to train in any public gymnasiums, claiming he wants to work out in complete privacy. Has the young Orton got something sneaky up his sleeve?

his life will be phenomenally successful if he employs pyramid power. He believes the theory that the pyramid shape gives off intense energy which can be transmitted to human beings. Greg's whole house is filled with pyramids and he's constructing a 40-foot edifice in his backyard. Though many scientists say pyramid power is a fraud, Greg is sure they will make him champion. People are laughing now, but watch pyramids spring up like weeds if Greg takes the NWA title.

* * *

You won't see Bob Orton Jr. around the gymnasium anymore. The grappler exclusively trains in secret sessions. No one knows why and Bob isn't telling. Is he hiding a new maneuver or trying to keep an injury secret? From the smile on Bob's face lately, people don't think he's worried about injury. □

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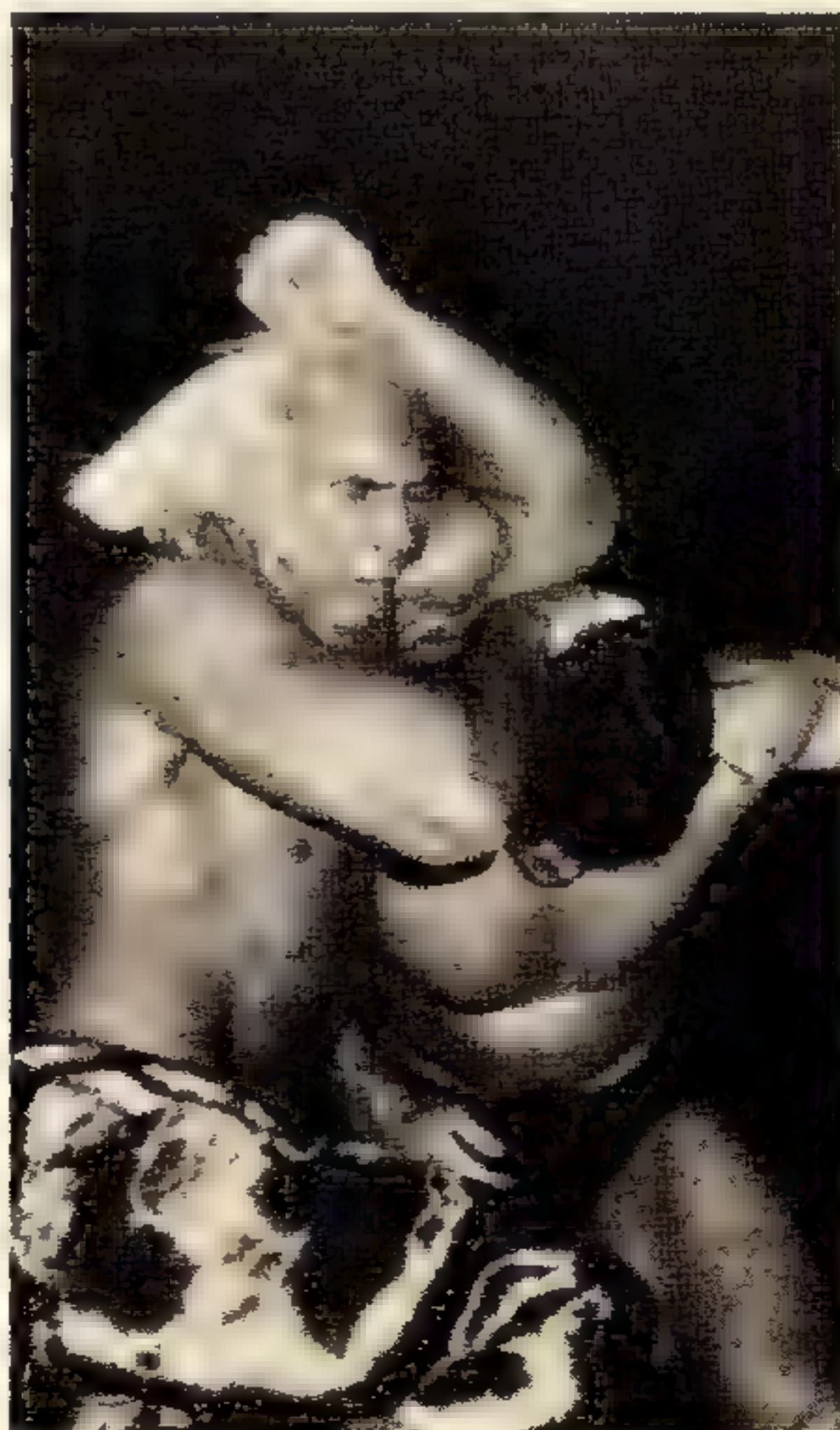
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SUPERSTAR GRAHAM

(Continued from Page 32)



Graham thwarts the challenge of Ivan Putski (above) and elbowsmashes Tony Garea (below).



a ruthless rulebreaker. There isn't five minutes in all his title defenses in which Graham can take pride. Yet, that isn't the point. You don't expect rulebreakers to be proud, dignified athletes. Despite their tactics, ways must be devised to beat them. It's getting harder and harder to think of ways to penetrate Graham's defenses. Most everyone assumed Graham would collapse under the pressure of a title. Instead, it turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to him.

"Did you see his matches against Tony Garea and Billy White Wolf? They were perfect examples of what I mean. Tony and White Wolf wrestled brilliantly, easily good enough to beat the Graham of old. Yet, Graham walked out with his title intact. Those two matches sent shock waves throughout the

sport. Soon, people will stop referring to Graham as the new WWWF champion. Soon, he'll be thought of as the WWWF champion. There may really be a Superstar Billy Graham era, though. I promise to do everything in my power to stop it."

Can Graham be stopped? While many wrestlers vow to do it, no one has proven they can. The foundations of Billy's championship are stronger than ever. His rulebreaking reign of terror appears invulnerable to all challenges.

How does the champion himself feel about this?

"I'm wrestling differently now," Graham states, "because I now have something to protect. Before, all I wanted to do was make my opponent grovel. If the referee mistakenly thought my methods were illegal, so what? But now I have a championship, a world's championship. I have to defend that with every fiber in my body.

"People thought I'd crack under the pressure. Well, people are never too smart. I knew pressure wasn't going to bother me. Hell, every time I step into the ring I risk a \$250,000-a-year career. Wouldn't you consider that pressure? Yet, each match I've proven myself worth the fortune they pay me.

"People underestimated me because they didn't want to think I was good. They want champions to be mealy-mouthed cretins like Sammartino. A man who isn't humble threatens them, makes them realize what worthless dirt they really are. I'm great and will say so anytime."

Thus speaks the new WWWF champion, the man who rules. And chances grow slimmer every day of a man toppling the king from his throne. You may not like Superstar Billy Graham, but none can deny his greatness. ☐

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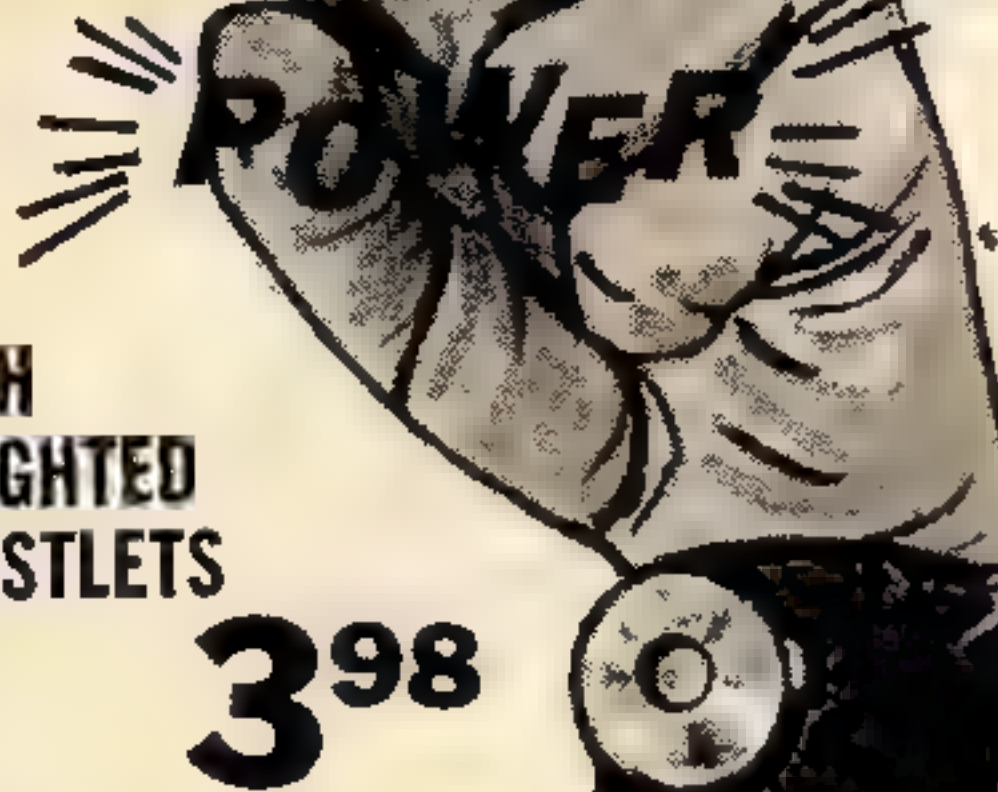
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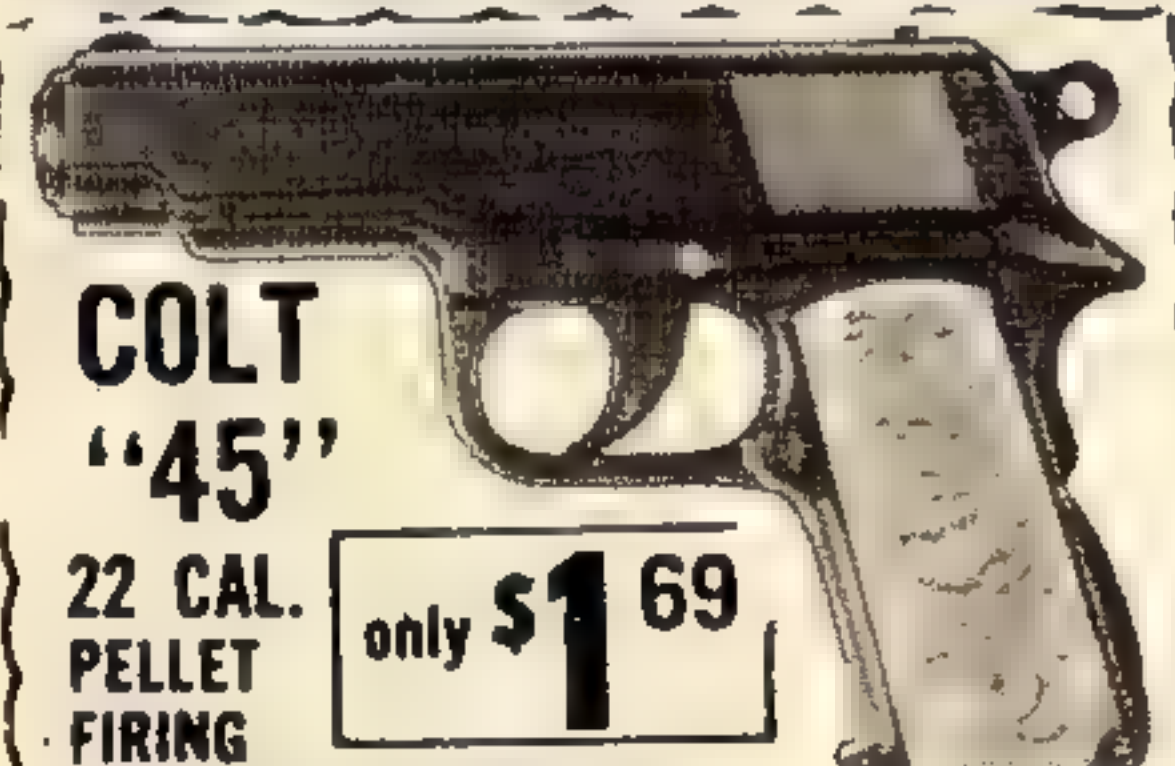
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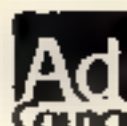
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THE BRISCO BROTHERS

(Continued from Page 36)



Jerry Brisco battles Ole Anderson in a single match. Jerry loves to team with brother Jack, but it could be hurting him—and the profession—more than he knows.

interjects, "although at times I don't know. Something happens in the pit of my stomach while watching Race walk into an arena wearing the belt. Something tells me to do everything in my power to take it from him. A champion is the vanguard of wrestling. And ours, unfortunately, is Harley Race."

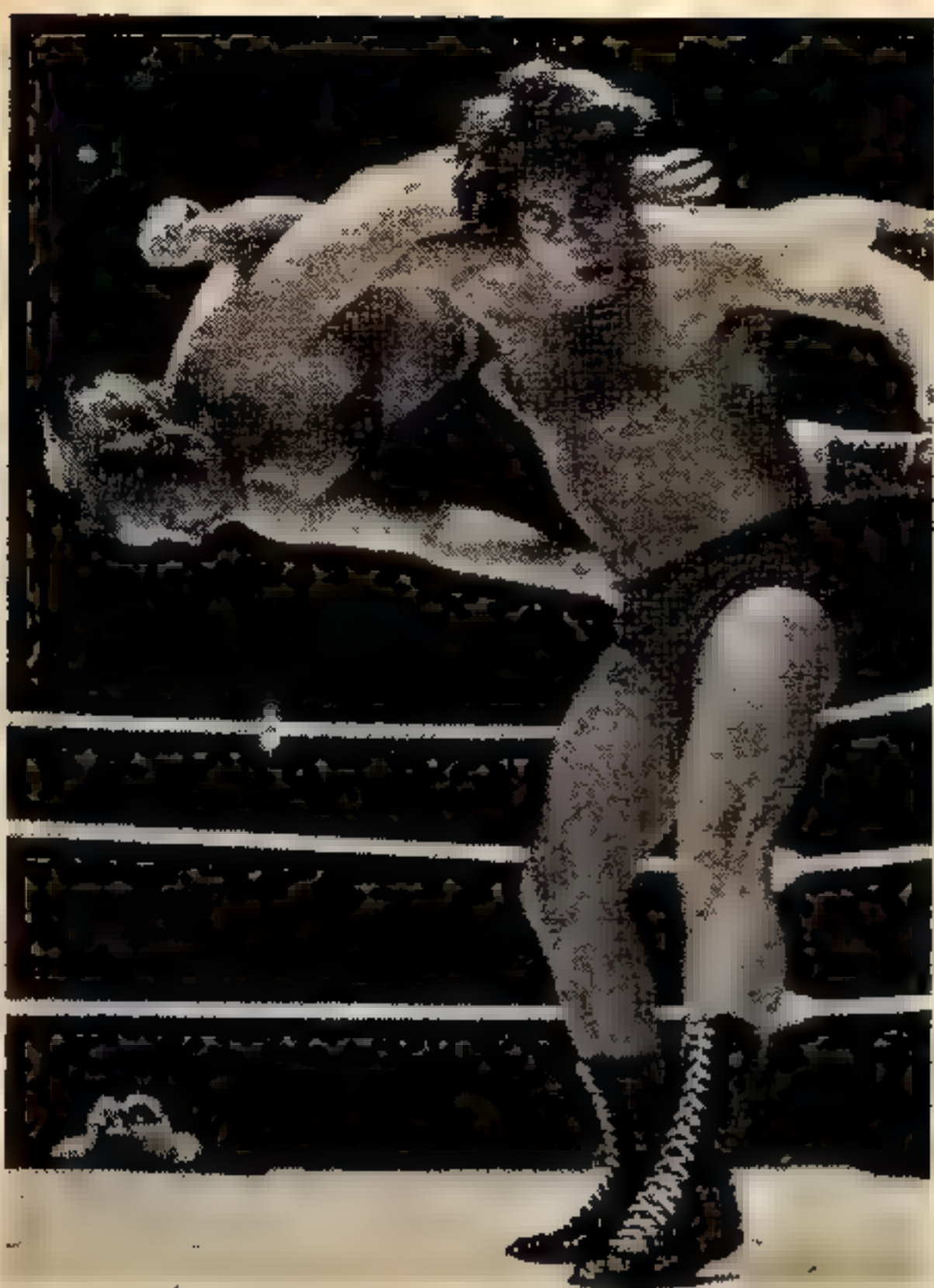
"Yet, at other times, I feel the important thing is what I'm doing with Jack. Look, when the pioneers went west to settle the frontier, many people accused them of running away from the responsibilities they had left behind. What Jack and I are doing is exploring new methods of tag team wrestling. We may be

discovering a new frontier. I think that's more important than changing the temporary situation that now exists. I hope it is, anyway."

"It's our decision," Jack continued, "no one else's. And I'll be glad to tell anyone what they can do with their objections."

"Do the critics bother you?"

"I'm used to people telling me what I should do," Jack declared. "They did it all through my championship. I learned early not to listen. When it comes down to it, the only man who knows what's best for me is me. I'm the one who has to live with the decisions. As far as I'm concerned, those clowns



Jack sends Dory Funk Jr. flying through the air. It has been some time since Jack and Dory have clashed one to one.

could just as well be talking into a mirror."

"Do you feel the same way, Jerry?"

"At times," Jerry said slowly, "while at other times it hurts a lot. I guess there's something about me that responds to the call of a crusade. And many wrestlers I respect are marching to the call to clean up wrestling. My absence is noticed. That hurts. But I still have to do what I believe is right. And being in a tag team now is what makes sense for me."

"Within a year," Jack concluded, "people will be apologizing to us for saying anything. They'll see what we're doing and thank us. Until then, let them say what they want. Doesn't bother me at all. And make sure you print that. I want those loudmouths to know just what I think of them."

In a year. A lot can happen in that span of time. Maybe the stranglehold rulebreakers now enjoy will be broken. Maybe the sport won't need people to rush to its defense. Maybe the Brisco brothers will show us a whole new form of tag team wrestling.

But the future can't help wrestling now. ☐

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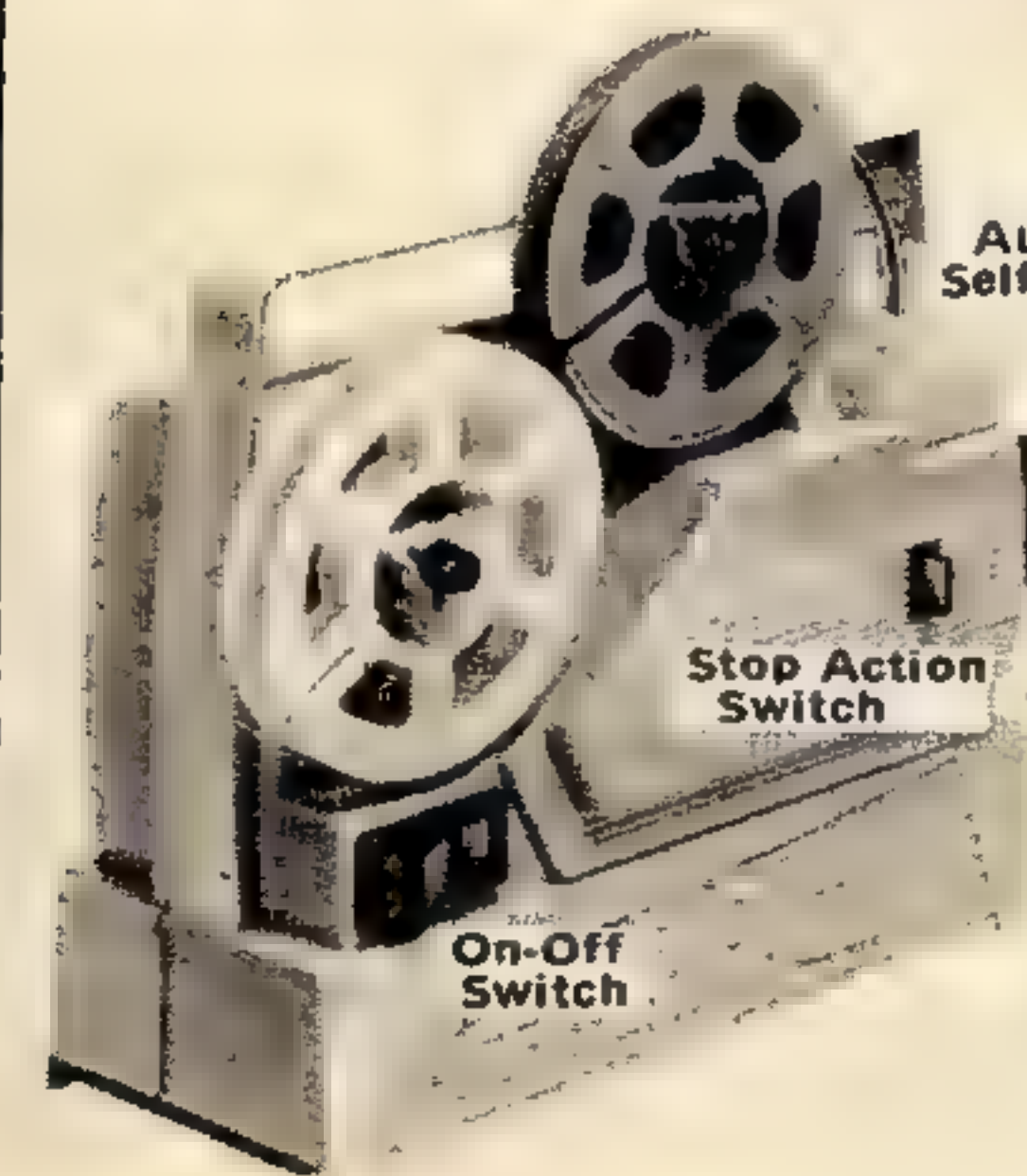
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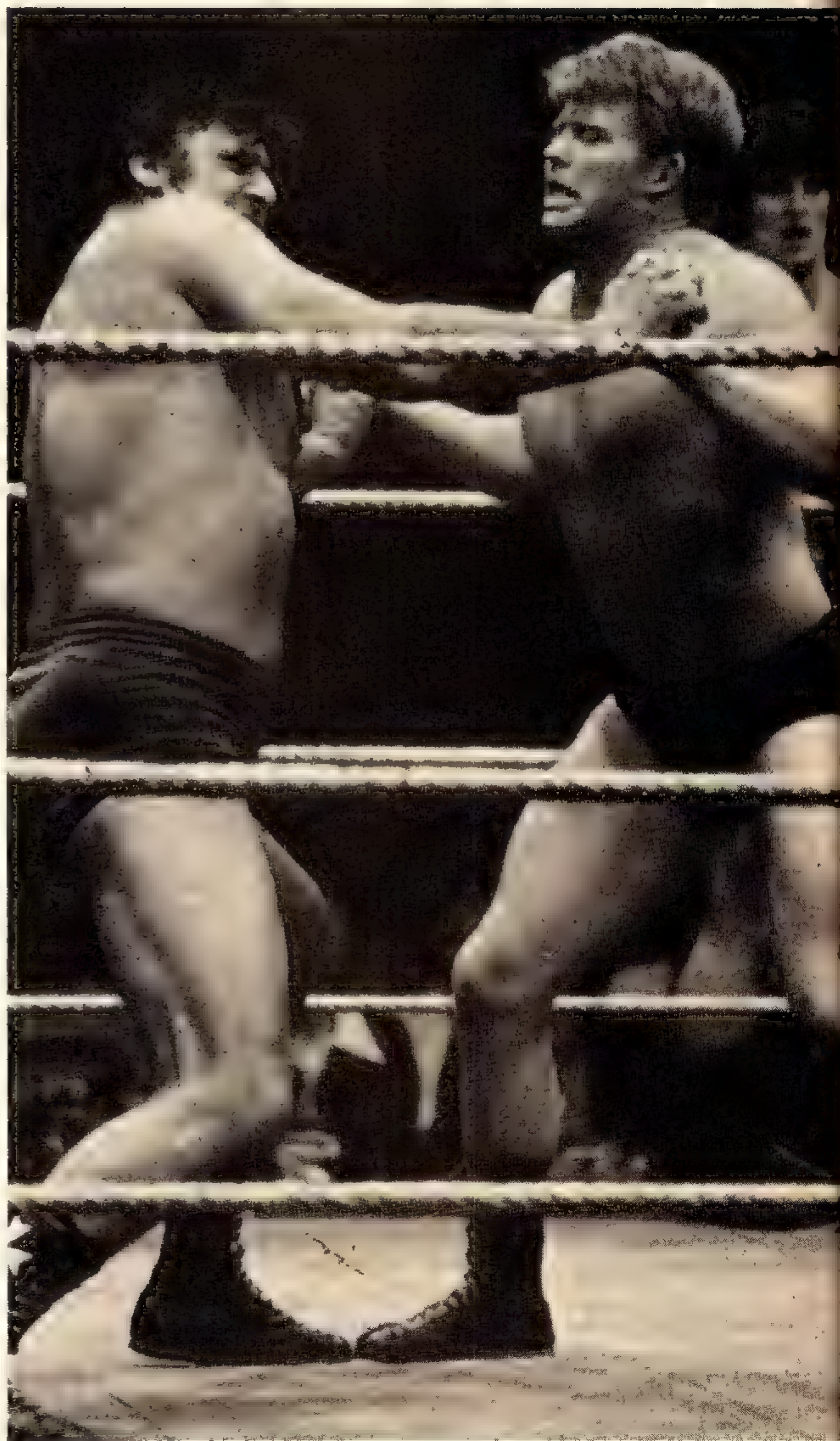
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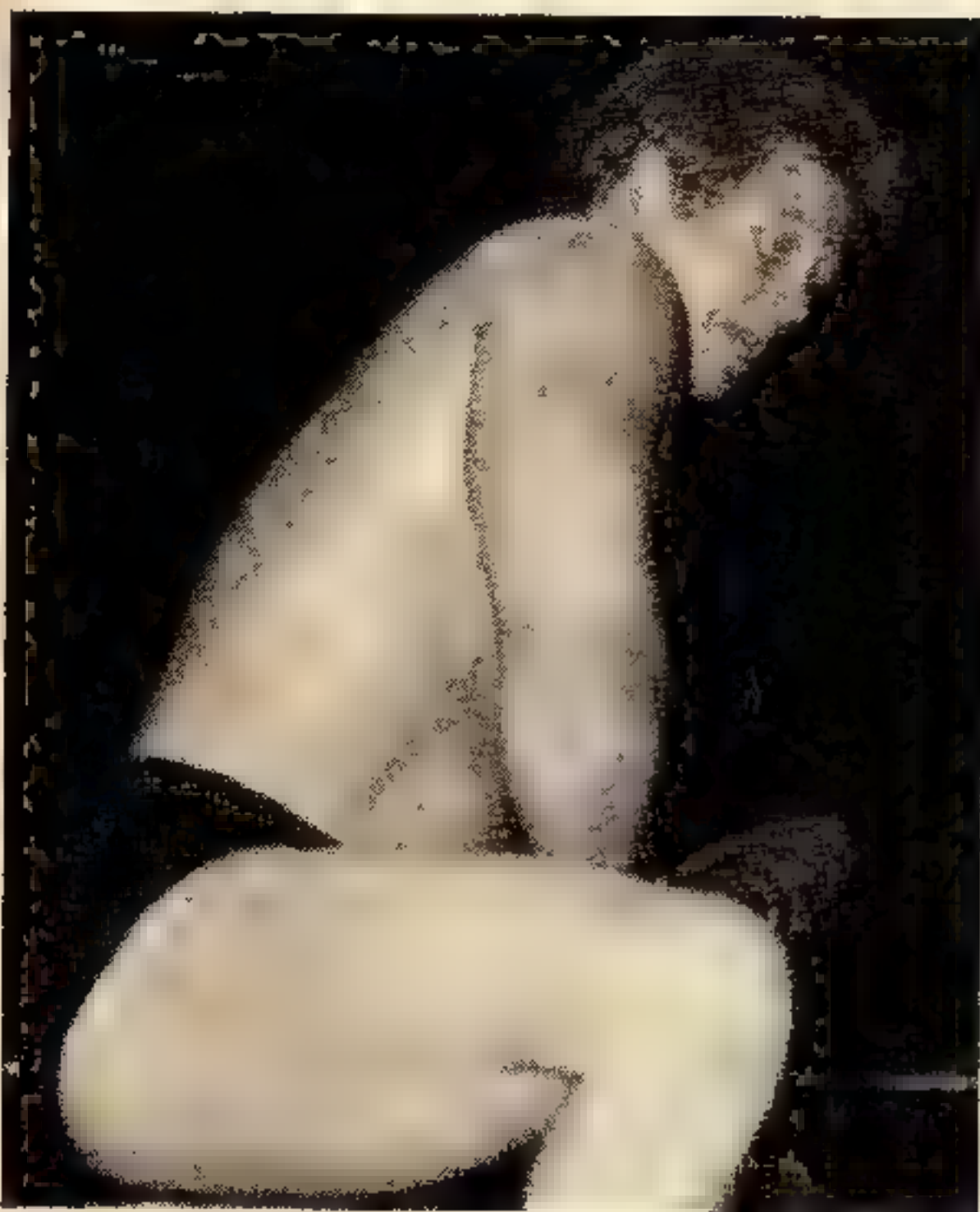
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BOB BACKLUND

(Continued from Page 40)



Backlund locks horns with Baron Scicluna in a test of strength. Bob easily won this test and eventually went on to whip Scicluna. Bob is determined to win the WWF title.



Bob is a study in determination as he works on the Executioner's leg. Bob won a big victory over the masked man.

was never any doubt he would turn professional after graduating from college. His meteoric rise to the top has been one of the most thrilling ascensions in sport. Many people credit his remarkable strategies for much of his success.

Every so often, when Bob finds himself in a small town outside of Fargo, North Dakota, he visits a gravesite. Lying six feet beneath the ground are the remains of Gil Bowen. The grappler goes there as if requesting his deceased friend's evaluation. Would Gil be happy for me, Bob wonders. Would Gil approve of the way I wrestle? Am I doing what he envisioned as he lay that day on his hospital bed? Still wondering, he walks off. There are still so many things to do. And as Gil showed him, there may be so little time to do it.

Wherever Bob goes, the notebook goes with him. At times, it seems as if the insights were written originally for him, not the friend who died too soon. Any maybe, in a strange way no one will ever understand, the book was written for Bob. And maybe, when Backlund gives that something extra to turn defeat into victory, Gil Bowen lives. □

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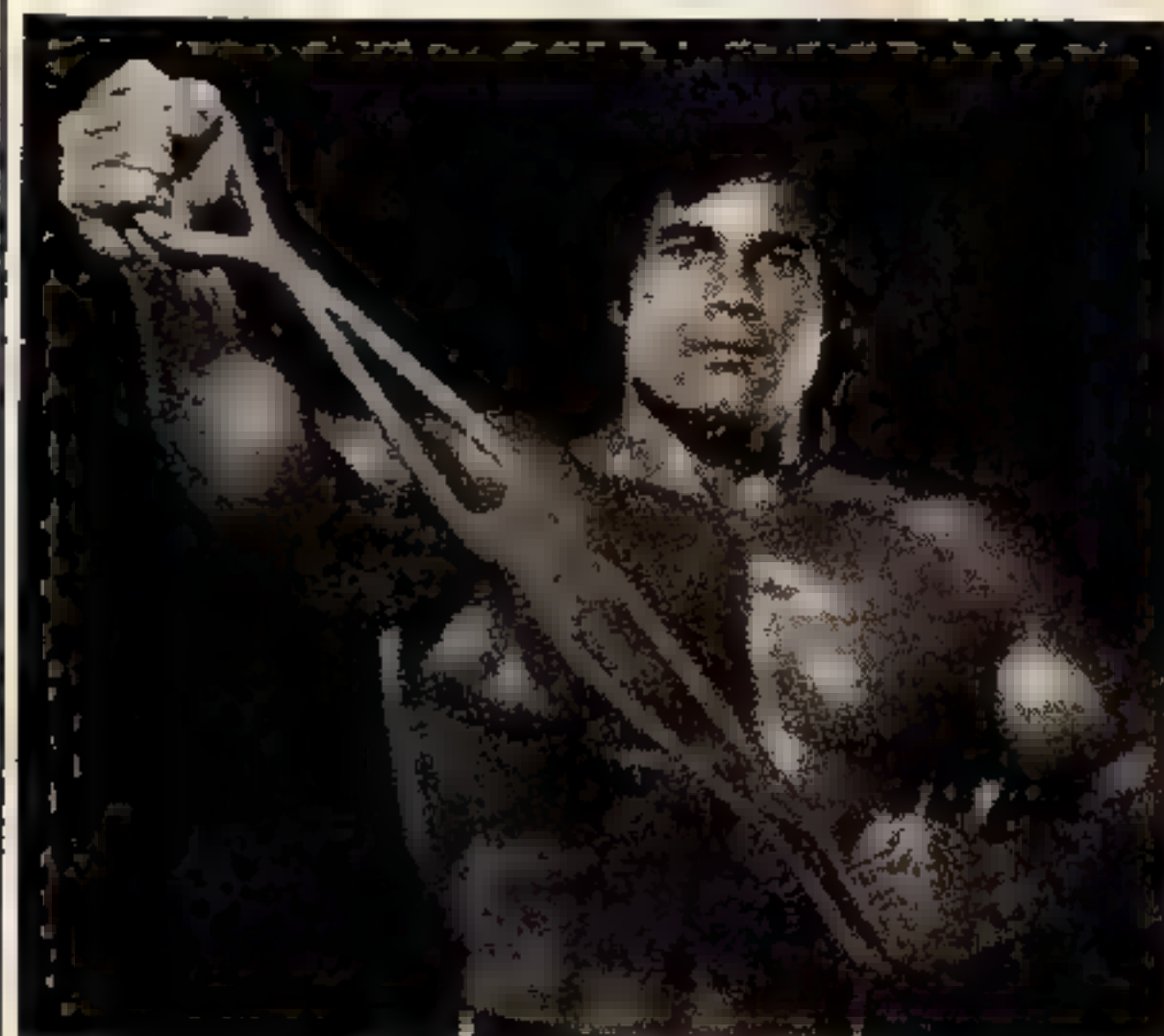
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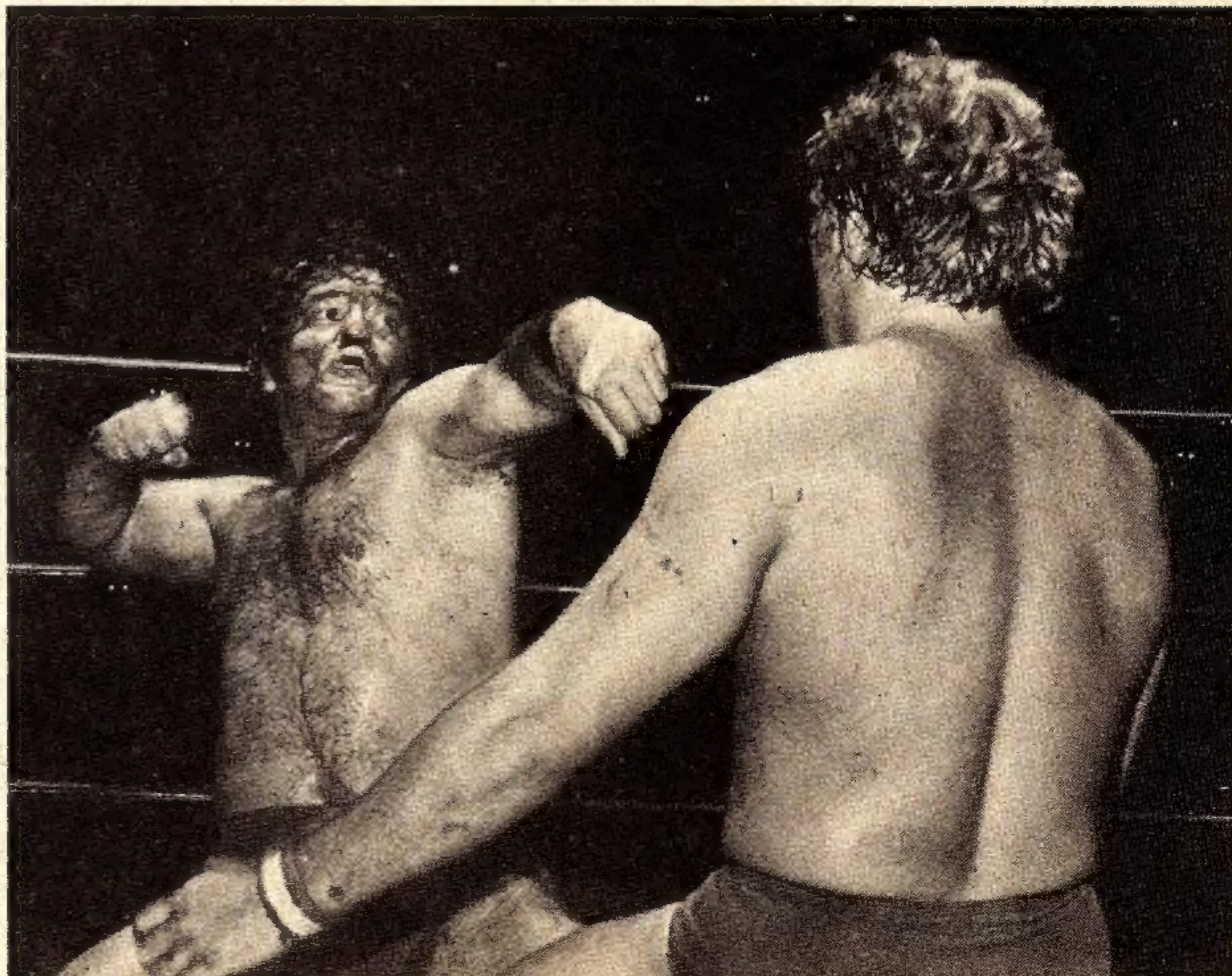
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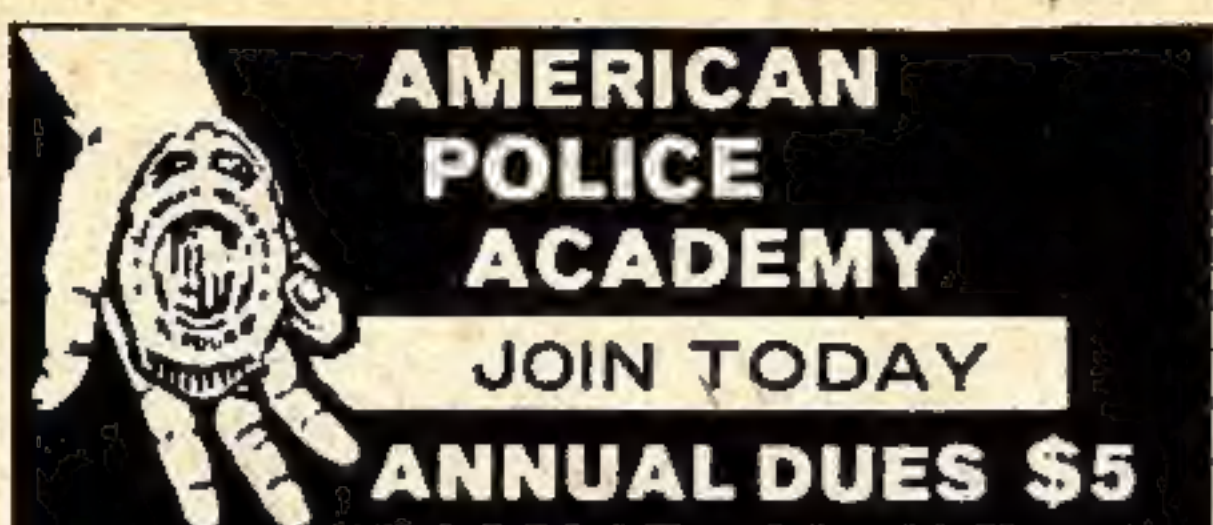
AREA CLOSE UP:

(Continued from Page 24)



One of the wildest matches ever took place in the Omni. It was a Texas Bullrope Match between Dusty Rhodes and Waldo Von Erich (above). Paul Jones, a bloody mess, pummels Dick Slater (below).





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SUPER STAR INTERVIEW

(Continued from Page 44)

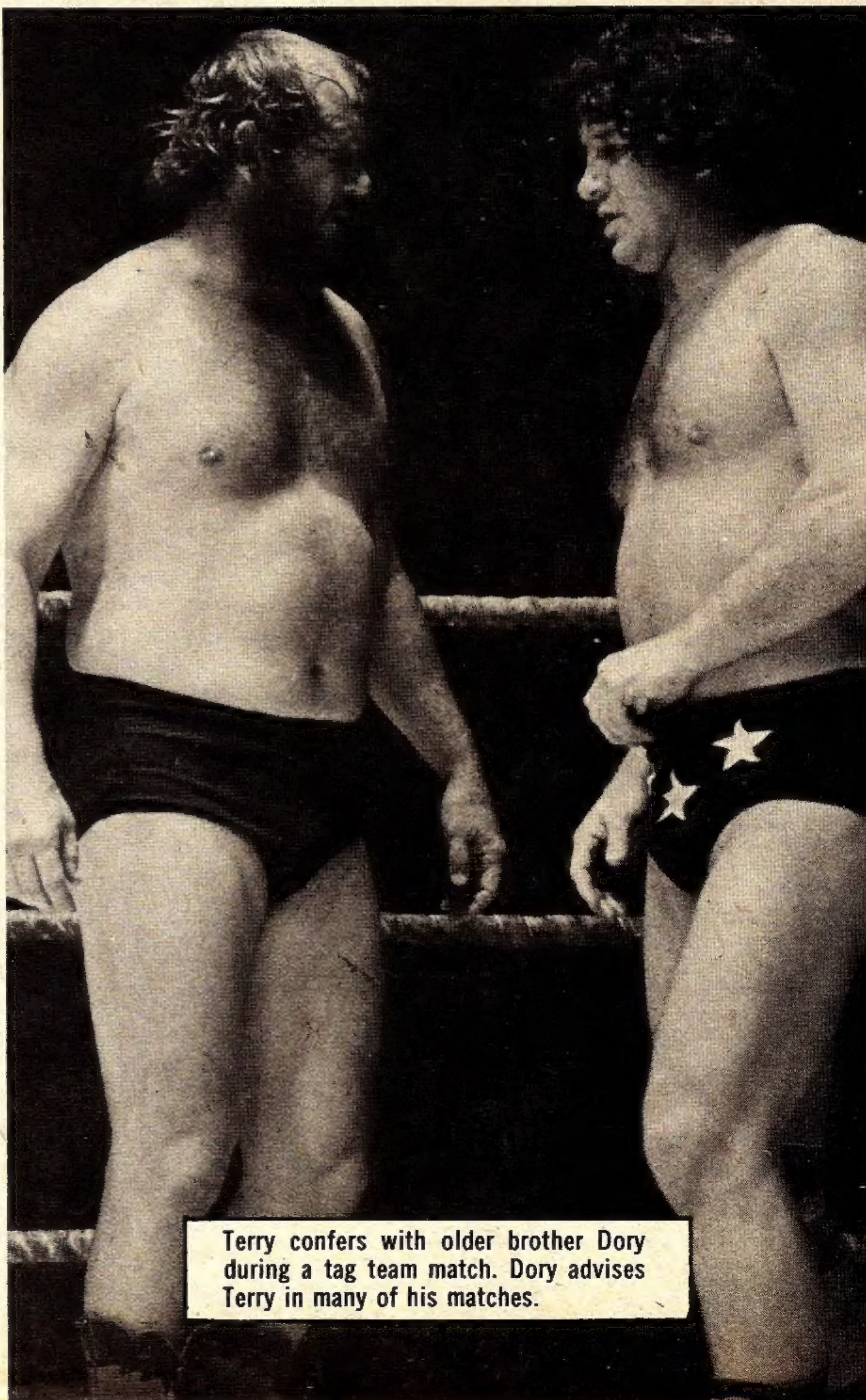
A: I could lose every match and I would still qualify for a title shot. The NWA knows I'm the best champion it ever had. When life with Harley Race as champion becomes too unbearable, the commissioners will come begging for me to wrestle Race for the belt.

Q: You sound rather sure of this.

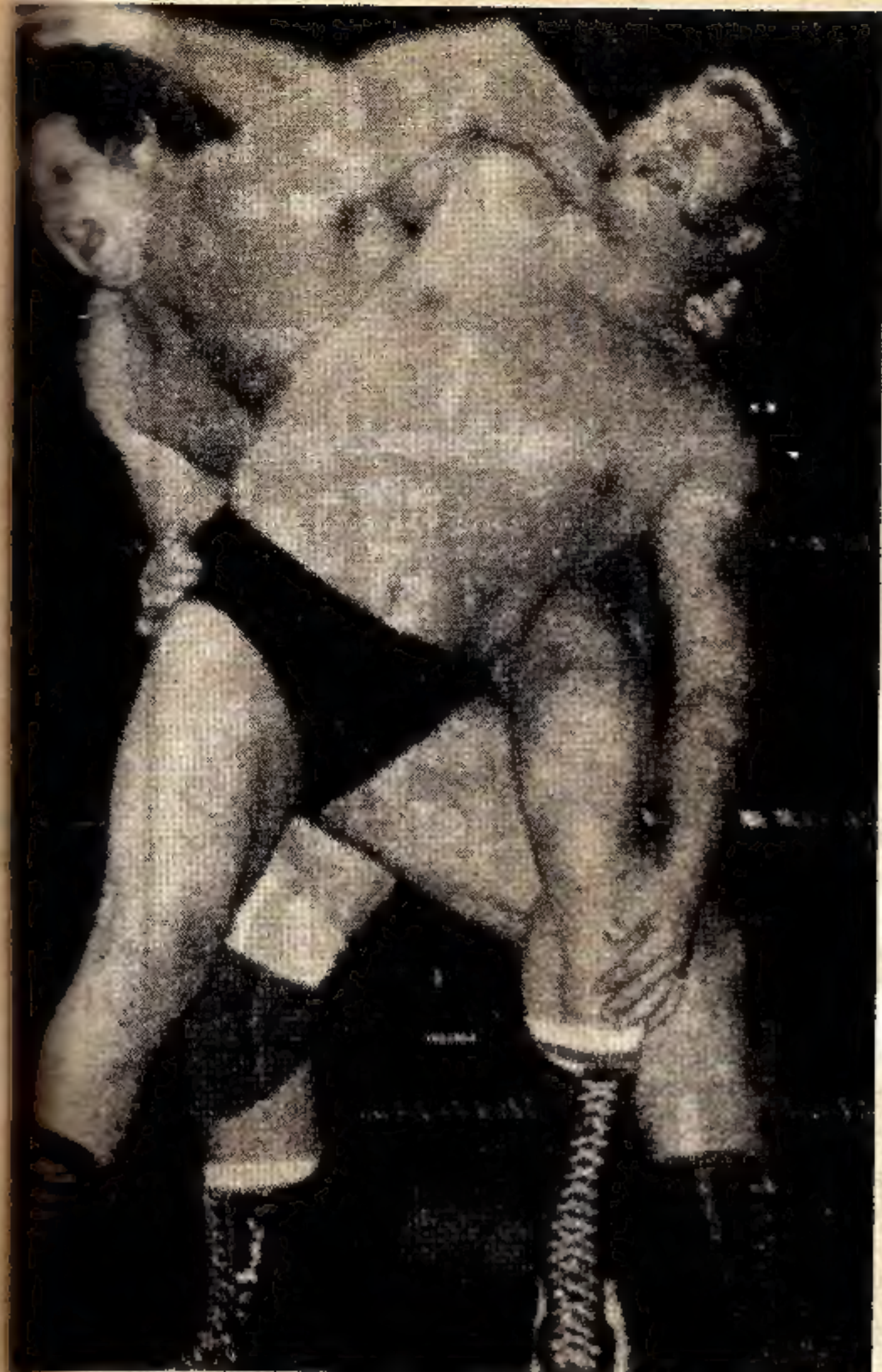
A: I am sure of this. The NWA needs me more than I need the NWA. Anyone can tell you that.

Q: Will your brother help you win the belt back?

A: Dory has always given me moral support. My whole



Terry confers with older brother Dory during a tag team match. Dory advises Terry in many of his matches.



In a few moments, Harley Race will reverse things and go on to win the NWA belt from Terry.

family has.

Q: But will you utilize him as a manager? Will he help you set your matches like he did when you were champion?

A: Dory is not now, has never been, nor will ever be my manager. He is his own man. He does as he pleases. If he helps me out once in a while, it is only because he wants to help.

Q: And he would never interfere in one of your matches?

A: Never. He wouldn't even think of doing such a thing.

Q: And you would never interfere in one of his matches?

A: Out of the question. Dory and I were raised to respect the rules.

Q: Thank you for this interview.

A: I'm sure it was a pleasure for you. Come around and visit me again when I become champion for the second time. I may even grant you another interview—if I'm in a good mood. ☐

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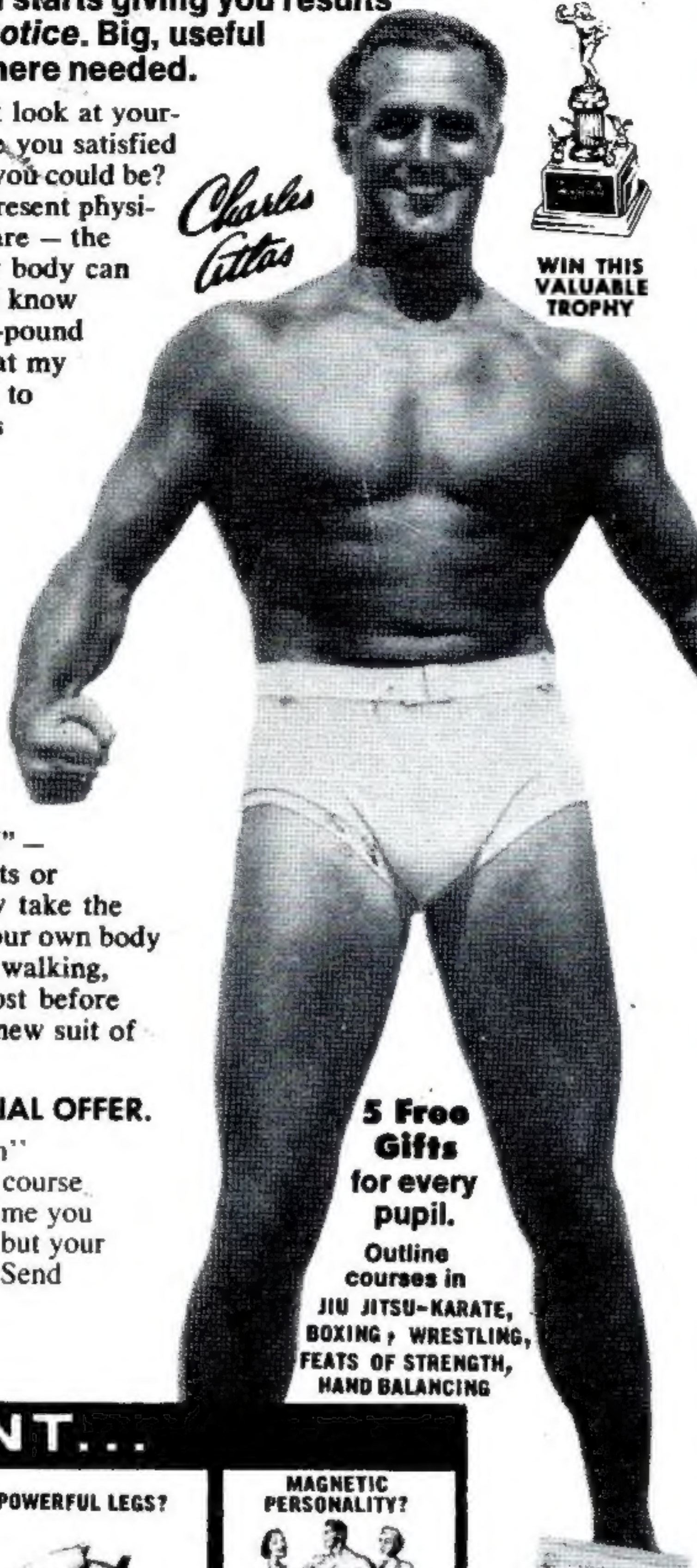
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